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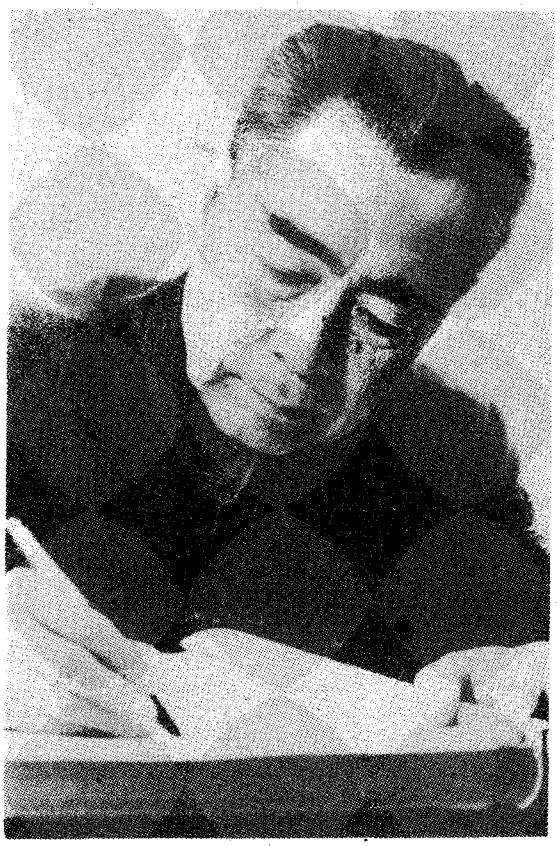

O. EDMUND CLUBB

'A Little Complicated'

CHINA AND THE U.S. AFTER CHOU

Arms for the Shah

POISE WITH OUR OWN PAHLAVI

Michael T. Klare

Barbara L. Bass

Harriette Arnow's Chronicles of Destruction

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LETTERS

reading history

Ithaca, N.Y.

In "American Attitudes Toward History" [*The Nation*, Dec. 13] Alexander Woodside quotes Clark Clifford's statement of 1969: "Only history will be able to tell whether or not our military presence in Southeast Asia was warranted. Certainly the decisions that brought it about were based upon a reasonable reading of the past three decades."

A "reasonable reading" of the years 1939-69 would not have missed one of the most important events of that time—the declaration of war by Congress against the Axis powers.

If Lyndon Johnson in 1965 had gone to Congress and asked for a declaration of war against North Vietnam, he would have given a "reasonable reading" to the history of the then recent past.

Curtis Nettels

debating Deuteronomy

New York City

In her review of *Against Our Will* [*The Nation*, Nov. 29], Helene E. Schwartz impugned my scholarship and understanding of certain passages in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Since she is wrong and I am right, I feel I must respond.

The Bible does not distinguish between seduction and rape. Talmudic theorists, writing centuries after the completion of the Pentateuch, sought to make such a distinction by arbitrarily naming Exodus 22:16-17 the seduction code and Deuteronomy 22:28-29 the rape code, but this was merely a quibbling convenience designed to cover ambiguous situations that the writers of the Pentateuch had not dealt with. Exodus ("the Covenant Code") was written much earlier than the more elaborate legalisms of Deuteronomy. Furthermore, the language of the two statutes is practically identical. The Hebrew patriarchs would hardly have devised a law to deal with the subtleties of seduction before they had created a law to deal with rape.

Schwartz's statement that "for the purpose of defining sexual offenses, betrothed women were considered as married" also comes from latter-day conventional Talmudic interpretation, and is questionable; but the reverse, that married women were considered as betrothed, is patently ridiculous. As I state in *Against Our Will*, our Hebrew forefathers had a single, solitary definition of rape: the theft of virginity. Married women, as nonvirgins, could not be victims of rape under this restricted definition. They were considered adulterous and punished for their own defilement.

Schwartz grievously fails to understand what I mean when I call rape in ancient times "a property crime of man against man, with woman as the property." I do not call rape a property crime because the penalty was "monetary," as she assumes. I use the phrase because the crime was perceived as a crime against the violated virgin's father. The virginity was "stolen" not from the girl but from her father. . . .

I deeply resent the charge of inaccuracy (used three times) in the Schwartz review. Facts may be awesome, but they are not debatable. I suggest to Schwartz that she take off her blinders, forget her Maimonides, and reread my book. Perhaps as an opening exercise (since I suspect male experts carry more weight with her than female experts), she should read *Sex Laws and Customs in Judaism* by Louis M. Epstein.

Susan Brownmiller

New York City

Louis Epstein characterizes his suggestion that the rape-seduction sections of the Bible originally may have been one law as "a fair conjecture" [p. 182]. Scholarly speculation, however fascinating, should not be elevated to the status of dogma. As to the nature of the Biblical sexual offense involving a betrothed or married woman, I suggest Ms. Brownmiller reread Epstein, pp. 196-201.

Helene E. Schwartz

The editors welcome letters from readers but regret that space limitations often prevent publication of those of more than 250 words.

EDITORIALS

No Sense, Common or Otherwise

In his State of the Union message, President Ford wrapped himself in a mantle he tried to suggest might have been worn by Tom Paine and Dwight D. Eisenhower. It was a threadbare effort. A link cannot be made between the fiery revolutionary call to action of Paine and the conservative dullness of Eisenhower, but that did not stop Mr. Ford from aspiring to this grotesque "Bicentennial" fancy dress.

The peculiarities of this Presidential address do not stop there: it had an unreal tone from start to finish. Here was a Republican President addressing an overwhelmingly Democratic Congress in an election year and demanding a series of actions which he perfectly well knows will not be taken. His demands were modest enough, given the great problems facing the country—his advisers have been telling the press that this lackluster is deliberate, based on polls that show the public disillusioned with political promises. Still, Mr. Ford is unlikely to get much, if anything, that he asked for.

It is not that he asked for much that would help the ailing economy and its millions of victims. A crumb here (a vague proposal on insurance against "catastrophic illness") and a "trickle-down" there (tax credits for business and for investments in common stocks—but you would have to hang on to those particular shares for seven years) was about all there was to it. Not a word was spoken about the "peace dividend" the home front was to benefit from once the war front was stilled in Indochina. In fact, Mr. Ford told us, we must spend boldly to remain "without equal" in military strength, another way of phrasing Nixon's "Number One." The price for keeping the Pentagon "king of the mountain," Ford reckons, is more than $100 billion. Congress was warned not to go on "crippling" the foreign intelligence apparatus, and the President's way of demanding the free hand in foreign affairs that his predecessors have taught him is appropriate was to endorse "strong central direction that allows flexibility of action."

The rest was pietistic rhetoric and simple exhortation. It was as if the speech had emerged from a computer into which had been programmed the election-year sentiments of the President's own special constituency as measured by opinion polling. That constituency is a narrow one, just broad enough, Mr. Ford hopes, to withstand Reagan's challenge from even farther to the Right. So it was not really a report on the state of the nation but an appeal to a fraction of the minority party.

As a nation, we have had many vulgar Presidential addresses on the state of our affairs. Few of them, however, have matched Mr. Ford's presumptuous evocation, and distortion, of a widely honored figure from our past. In claiming to base his State of the Union message on the *Common Sense* of Thomas Paine, the President has tried our souls and reminded us of Paine's words that "The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related that it is difficult to class them separately." It was painful at the end to look at the man, standing with Paine on one side, Ike on the other, and above this unlikely trio, God in whom we trust.

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Fatal Shoves

There are always grounds for suspicion when politicians of one party predict that one of another party will win a nomination and therefore face their candidate in the election. Such forecasts are hardly objective feats of divination; they are pronounced for their effect (negative) on their opponents. It is in this light that recent statements by President Ford and Agriculture Secretary Butz should be viewed. Both of them have predicted that Hubert Humphrey will be the Democrats' Presidential nominee this year. One obvious purpose of this Republican peep into the Democratic future is to discredit the whole laborious nominating contest the Democrats are now engaged in. It is to ridicule a process in which a baker's dozen of candidates are chasing one another around the country by saying that an old man who is not even a candidate will end up as winner of a race he didn't honor with his presence.

What harm it will do to Humphrey to be thus singled out is not yet clear and perhaps never will be (it might even help his barely concealed ambitions to get such a "mention"). But another declared noncandidate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan (he took himself off the Massachusetts primary ballot), has had another kind of mention from a source that must once have been repellent to him. Moynihan, a registered Democrat, has received a fulsome accolade and all-out endorsement from William Buckley's *National Review* (January 23). The reactionary magazine hails Moynihan as "a patriot, and . . . man of the West," whatever that is, and calls him "not only a good but virtually the ideal Democratic nominee for the Presidency." It goes so far as to question why the Democrats are "fooling around with a lot of sows' ears when they have at hand a genuine silk purse."

The *National Review* has, of course, long held the view that Ronald Reagan is the right man for President, so its support of Moynihan could be some kind of calculated trap for him and for the Democrats (would Buckley see him as a "patsy" for his right-wing hero, in some way a Daniel who would not survive in the ultraconservative lions' den?). If Moynihan one day does run for high office, and as a Democrat, it would look good on his record to have repudiated in indignant terms the support of William Buckley and his *National Review*. We do not predict that he will do so.

Fire Hazard

Flashpoint, powder keg or cauldron are clichés of conflict that fail to suggest the seriousness and immediacy of the threat to peace posed by the situation in Lebanon. The threat is not only to the Middle East but, quite conceivably, to a much wider arena.

So far, one of the few positive elements in this dangerous mess is that the two superpowers, the United States and Russia, have recognized the Lebanese civil war as something from which they can gain no advantage by direct intervention. The considerations that prevent this tortured little country's near neighbors, Israel and Syria, from taking open action apply in spades to the major powers, and they have had the sense to make that clear to everyone.

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Americans, however, would do well to remind themselves that we have a national "doctrine," backed by a resolution of Congress in 1957, which authorizes the President to intervene in the Middle East with our armed forces under certain conditions. The name of it is the "Eisenhower Doctrine," and it became official policy in the wake of the British-French-Israeli operation to recover by force the Suez Canal after Nasser seized it in 1956, an operation which we stopped dead in its tracks, largely from fear of the Russian reaction. Not only does that "doctrine" still exist as national policy, never having been erased from the books, but in part Eisenhower relied on it in 1958 when he ordered 14,300 American Marines ashore near Beirut to help stabilize a political situation in Lebanon far less threatening than the one today. Historians have ever since debated whether that American intervention did any good, some thinking it was a fiasco (the Marines never had to do any fighting).

The Eisenhower Doctrine is just one of a number of doctrines and policies that clutter the files of our foreign policy. They resemble the broad "emergency powers" available to any President which remain the law of the land decades after the reasons for a Presidential proclamation of emergency have disappeared. We are still at least two years away from erasing these nearly dictatorial domestic powers of the President, despite the work of the Church-Mathias committee of the Senate.

The Eisenhower Doctrine authorizes the President to send in the troops if, in his judgment, that would preserve the "independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East." All that is needed is a request for such help from a government in the area which feels itself threatened by "any country controlled by international communism." That did not describe the problem in Lebanon in 1958, but we went in anyway, since Eisenhower also felt authorized to order the Marines ashore on his own "inherent" powers as Commander in Chief.

Powerful objective considerations are keeping us and the Russians out of Lebanon at the moment, but the authority to go in lies there in a dusty attic, all wrapped up in official red tape. There ought to be a housecleaning of all such ancient and irrelevant policies and authorizations. They are dangerously inflammable.

Policeman's Lot

Is it possible to feel sorry for the FBI? J. Edgar Hoover's successor (forgetting the messy interregnum of L. Patrick Gray III) has suggested the need to sympathize with the police agency that behaved so outrageously for so long. Speaking in Scottsdale, Ariz., a few days ago, Clarence M. Kelley, the FBI's director, complained of the adverse effect all the recent criticism of the agency's "intelligence" activities has had on the morale of the G-men. "This has resulted," Kelley said, "in confusion in the minds of many and distress certainly in the hearts [*sic*] of those of us who are close to the problem," and he went on to say that, as a result, "our credibility has been lessened and our effectiveness somewhat diminished."

Does Mr. Kelley want to resurrect untarnished the old myths that Hoover spent a lifetime inventing, inflating and propagating? Are we to forget all those unconscionable violations of law and propriety that have finally been dragged into the light? If Director Kelley is to restore the morale of his thousands of agents and the reputation of the FBI it will take years of solid and lawful activity by the agency in its proper role. The American public will not be quick to forget the excesses of the agency created by J. Edgar Hoover and immortalized by the gigantic Washington pillbox that bears his name.

Like It Is

> Our schools do not educate. Our prisons punish, but they do not deter or rehabilitate. Our economy produces fewer goods at higher prices and, worse yet, far fewer jobs than are needed and sought. Today, eight million Americans are looking for jobs that are not there, and millions more have given up looking altogether. Thirty million Americans have no health insurance of any kind and face financial ruin in the event of serious illness. Taxes at all levels of government soar while services decline. And a growing fear begins to grip our people that the quality of life will be worse, not better, for their children and their children's children.
>
> Through it all, our political parties seem to exist for the sole purpose of raising money or choosing delegates or candidates as an end in itself—to get a shot at the brass ring, but with little consideration of what to do with it once gotten, or why.

These sad, angry, and even quite radical sentences do not come from some insurgent group or even from an ambitious liberal Democrat with his eye on the White House. They are the words of Charles McC. Mathias of Maryland, a Republican member of the U.S. Senate, and they appeared in the December 15th issue of the *Ripon Forum*, the organ of the Republican "liberal" group which is being increasingly stranded as the GOP mainstream surges to the Right. Senator Mathias has shown no signs of following Wayne Morse by switching his affiliation from Republican to Democratic. And it must be said that the party Morse switched to in 1956 has lost much of its appeal for a politician who thinks in liberal terms and finds himself in the traditional "conservative" party. Several of the Democratic aspirants for the Presidency pay only token tribute to the truly liberal parts of their party's heritage, even in a time of deep economic trouble, as they scramble toward some mythical midpoint (far right of Center, really) that they have been persuaded actually exists.

Senator Mathias is said to be considering a run for the Presidency as an "independent" (along with the increasingly eccentric Eugene McCarthy, who is beginning to resemble a more intelligent Harold Stassen). If he should choose to go that notoriously unpromising route, it can at least be said that he starts out with a suitably clear-eyed view of the troubles afflicting the country.

Sheep's Clothing

It is being said, especially by those who believe a country is only as strong as its spook squads, not only that any attempt to restrain the CIA's appetite for international mischief would lay bare our breast to the foe, but also that it is entirely unnecessary, since recent exposés have taught our agents that they must fold their cloaks and put away their daggers. They are chastened and will sin no more.

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But look, on January 20 *The New York Times* reported that the House Select Committee on Intelligence (a body that may never reach the bottom of its file of evidence, since the CIA keeps piling more on at the top) had caught the well-spanked and thoroughly reformed agency cooking its books on the arms it has been sending into Angola. Automatic pistols and semi-automatic carbines, for example, have been carried on the ledger as though they were Saturday Night Specials, and the result of such systematic undervaluation has been to hide the fact that thus far our outlay for that civil war is about twice the $31 million the Ford administration told Congress it had spent since the first of the year.

Of course, Angolans don't much care what price tag hangs on the guns that kill them, but the American public, which is still paying in inflation and unemployment for the longest, most miserable war in U.S. history, cares a good deal. And if Congress is not furious, it has utterly forgotten who is supposed to hold the purse strings. As for reform—forget it.

Mrs. Javits's 'Liberation'

The most distressing aspect of the Javits-Iranian foreign agent case, a soap opera which may have reached some kind of sudsy dramatic conclusion by the time this note appears, is the language Mrs. Javits has used to justify her behavior. The ethical questions involved in the hiring of the wife of a Senator by a foreign power to promote its airline, tourism or whatever hardly need comment, though they were not all that plain to Marion Javits.

But to defend herself against charges of impropriety for accepting $67,500 a year as an agent of the Shah, she pictured herself as just a working girl like any other, "beginning to cash in my chips," as she characteristically put it. "It is as a woman I am operating here," she declared, though the only "chips" she has were piled up by a husband who happens to be on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Genuinely liberated women, and women's liberationists, will not easily forgive her for masking greed and ambition in a coarse version of the language of that respectable movement.

The Wilmington Ten

Though their conviction for arson and conspiracy was rooted in the kind of Southern justice often thought to be anachronistic in the 1970s, the Supreme Court has refused to hear the appeals of the Rev. Ben Chavis and nine others, the Wilmington (N.C.) Ten.

Chavis now heads the Washington field office of the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice. At the time of the 1971 Wilmington racial disorders which precipitated the indictments, he was a field representative for the church, a roving troubleshooter trying to raise black consciousness in the South, using his considerable organizing skills to help settle disputes in communities where tension threatened to explode. His arrest record—and the list of ensuing dropped charges and acquittals—prior to the Wilmington trouble "reads like a primer on harassment," as Mark Pinsky put it in these pages ("Harassment Without End: North Carolina Blots Its Record," October 11, 1975).

After tension in Wilmington had cooled, Chavis was indicted along with a white VISTA volunteer and eight teenaged blacks. At their first trial, a jury of ten blacks and two whites was selected—but the prosecutor announced he was ill and the trial was voided before testimony could be taken. A new trial followed, this time with a jury of ten whites and two blacks—and a healthy prosecutor who had used more than forty peremptory challenges against prospective black jurors. The judge on the case had refused to dismiss for cause jurors who belonged to the KKK or to allow the defense to inquire about their racial attitudes. The chief prosecution witness against the ten, according to Chavis, has regularly telephoned him and his mother to recant his testimony, claiming police promises had led him to lie.

Chavis's church has said it will initiate a new round of appeals; doing so might keep the ten temporarily free. Meanwhile, Chavis confronts a twenty-nine-to-thirty-four-year prison sentence—the maximum—and the others face sentences ranging from seven to twenty-six years. The times they may be changing—but not yet in North Carolina—and not for the highest court in the land.

Four Awards

We are happy to report four awards to *Nation* contributors during 1975.

The P.E.N. American Center has presented the Lucille J. Medwick Memorial Award for 1975 to Grace Schulman, *The Nation*'s poetry editor. The citation was "in recognition of the range of her work as poet, critic, translator and editor, and in appreciation of the vitality and commitment with which she has served the young, the unrecognized, and the unpopular."

Alicia Patterson Foundation fellowships were awarded last month, at the eleventh national competition, to five journalists for travel and study during 1976. Three of the five winners were *Nation* contributors. One was Penny Lernoux, our Latin American correspondent, who will write a book on the impact of revolution on the Catholic Church in Latin America. The other two recipients were Mary Clay Berry, who will write on Washington lobbyists, and Lucian Truscott IV, whose book will be on West Pointers, the attitudes and experiences of the class of 1969, and their effect on the Army.

The outstanding work these four prize winners have done for *The Nation* is a legitimate source of pride.

Copyright on Public Property

The fact that the federal government has in recent years become the nation's largest generator of knowledge has somehow been overlooked in the copyright legislation now pending before Congress. Considering that the primary purpose of the 30,000-word measure is to take into account the vast changes that have taken place since 1909, when the last copyright law was enacted, the oversight is disquieting.

Section 8 of the law now on the books states that "No copyright shall subsist in the original text of any work which is in the public domain . . . or in any publication of

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the United States Government, or any reprint, in whole or in part, thereof."

This phrasing is to be replaced by the following barely noticed sentence in Section 105 of the proposed statute: "Copyright protection under this title is not available for any work of the United States Government, but the United States Government is not precluded from receiving and holding copyrights transferred to it by assignment, bequest or otherwise." Tucked away in Section 101 of the pending legislation is a clause defining "a work of the United States Government" as "a work prepared by an officer or employee of the United States Government as part of his official duties."

The definition in Section 101 does not take into account the billions in tax funds expended annually on research by government contractors. Many ostensibly private contractors are actually creatures of the government, little more than publicly subsidized enterprises. The documents they are paid to prepare for the government should be treated as public property.

As the American Newspaper Publishers Association pointed out in its early objections to Section 105, "a great number of government officers and employees, including administrative assistants, research workers, lawyers, economists, and others on a professional level, devote substantial amounts of time and efforts to the preparation of . . . material [that] might not be held to be within the scope of their official duties or employment."

Section 105 would result in less and less access to authoritative informational material from the government. At present, although billions in public funds are devoted to research, only a negligible sum is allocated for the printing and public sale of such material by the Superintendent of Documents. The situation would become substantially worse under Section 105. The advantages of commercial publication (often without disclosure of governmental origin and subsidization) would inevitably be given preferential treatment.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that anyone who has the legal right to copyright has the legal right to censor. The Copyright Office admitted as much when it recommended that government agencies be given the right to copyright publications that "must be controlled to prevent distortion in a dangerous manner."

As for the provision of the proposed law permitting federal agencies to engage in copyright control over works "transferred" to "the United States Government . . . by assignment, bequest, or otherwise," it would be wise for Congress to take into careful account the full implications of such bureaucratic power.

In view of the above considerations, the phrasing of Section 8 of the existing law should be retained but supplemented by the following definition: "A publication of the United States Government is a work that is a product of activities financed by funds received from the United States Government."

M.B. Schnapper, Editor
Public Affairs Press

'A LITTLE COMPLICATED'

CHINA AND THE U.S. AFTER CHOU

O. EDMUND CLUBB

Peking's official obituary described the death of Chou En-lai, Premier of the People's Republic of China (PRC), as "a gigantic loss" to the party, the army and the nation; to the cause of China's socialist revolution and construction; and "to the international cause of opposing imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism, as well as to the cause of the international Communist movement."

The description was true to the man. A master administrator, Chou was first and foremost a revolutionary—and had achieved much prominence in the field of foreign affairs. He was a consummate statesman (for the first decade of the PRC's existence, he was concurrently both Premier and Foreign Minister), suave and personable, knowledgeable with respect to the intricacies of the world situation and, in action, a tactician Machiavelli would have admired. Given his eminent role in China's foreign relations, his death led naturally to the question: what effect will his passing have on future Sino-American relations?

To answer that question, one must first have an accurate perception of the nature of the *present* Sino-American relationship, and then deal with the matter within the context of the PRC's overall foreign policy—and this without deceptive oversimplification. Toward the end of the Pacific war, when the Nationalist and Communist factions in China were maneuvering to gain political advantage over each other preparatory to the final armed struggle, Chairman Mao Tse-tung admonished his comrades, with respect to the matter of tactics, that "China's problems are complicated, and our minds must also be a little complicated." When addressing oneself to the subject of China's foreign policy, it is essential that the mind be "a little complicated."

The PRC has been consistently concerned from the beginning with advancing its economic and political power, to the end that China should resume its "rightful" position of superiority in Asia—and then go on to play a leading role in the accomplishment of world revolution. That has been the long-term objective of Chairman Mao, the supreme strategist; and Chou, the tactician, loyal to Mao's thinking, never quarreled with that strategic concept. The practical day-to-day issues were with respect to current trends in world affairs, the balance and imbalance of world forces, and the selection of prime enemies and temporary

O. Edmund Clubb was a U.S. Foreign Service officer from 1928 to 1952, serving in China, Indochina and the Soviet Far East. He is the author of Twentieth Century China, China and Russia: The Great Game *and* The Witness and I (*all Columbia University Press*).

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allies. As regards the last issue in particular, Mao's basic conception of how progress is achieved through the interaction of "contradictions" dictated flexibility and a pragmatic pursuit of zigzag lines. In operation, the Chinese revolutionaries are charged to determine "the principal enemy of the moment," and then to enlist others—even other, lesser enemies—against that principal enemy. Where tactics are concerned, the distinction of being an ally, or an enemy, of the PRC, depending as it does upon changing circumstances, lacks warranty of permanence.

But in the longer term, Mao Tse-tung envisages the forces of revolution as constituting the PRC's decisive potential allies. Defense Minister Lin Piao expounded the Maoist theorem in an essay (September 1965) entitled "Long Live the Victory of People's War!", in which he theorized that the revolutionary "world countryside" comprising Asia, Africa and Latin America would surround and overcome the "world towns"—North America and Western Europe. The world socialist countries, with the USSR excluded because of its revisionism, should form a united front to support "people's war" in the world countryside, and thus advance the larger struggle against "U.S. imperialism and its lackeys." He argued that "The whole capitalist-imperialistic system has become drastically weaker and is in the process of increasing convulsion and disintegration." Said Lin: "Everything is divisible. And so is this colossus of U.S. imperialism. It can be split up and defeated."

Major PRC policy statements have frequently been made by leaders other than Mao, but they can usually be assumed to have been issued with the Chairman's express sanction, and often as a result of his formulation. "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." It was entirely evident from Lin's treatment of his subject that on this occasion in particular he was expressing the views of Mao Tse-tung himself. And Lin's injúnction that, "To win the struggle against U.S. imperialism and carry people's wars to victory, the Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary people throughout the world must resolutely oppose Khrushchev revisionism" established clearly that, by this time, the USSR had also been thrust into the "enemy" category. Mao now had adopted the "dual adversary" concept.

Four years later, in 1969, when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution had run its destructive course in China's domestic and foreign affairs, the Nixon Doctrine displayed to Peking's attentive gaze a new, attractive prospect: the United States, then heavily engaged in Vietnam, proposed to reduce its direct military intervention in Asian affairs. In the spring of 1971, Peking performed the Ping-Pong gambit—a manifestation of "people's diplomacy" instead of "the people's war"—and then, in February 1972, in the sacred precincts of the PRC, President Nixon subscribed to the Five Principles that the Bandung Conference of Asian and African States had adopted as doctrine seventeen years earlier, including the principle of "peaceful coexistence." In the same joint communiqué of February 27 the United States agreed that Taiwan was a part of China. There was no agreement for terminating the treaty that allied the United States with the Nationalist regime that governed the island; but Peking had already, in September 1971, taken over China's seat in the United Nations. Détente had come to East Asia. The PRC had thus won a substantially larger measure of security, and of maneuverability, in the world arena. And in 1973 the United States withdrew its military forces from Vietnam. East Asian politics had entered a new stage.

In those circumstances, the Tenth Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress of August 1973 bore a special significance. Chou En-lai made the political report to the gathering, and his analysis of the international situation still adhered generally to the "dual adversary" line, but with a difference. He said:

> Today it is mainly the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the USSR, that are contending for hegemony. . . . The West always wants to urge the Soviet revisionists eastward to divert the peril toward China. . . . At present the Soviet revisionists are making a feint to the east while attacking in the west, and stepping up their expansion in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and every place their hands can reach. . . . U.S. imperialism started to go downhill after its defeat in the war of aggression against Korea. . . . It could not but pull out of Vietnam.

Theretofore, official spokesmen in Peking had regularly informed visiting foreign dignitaries—and journalists—that the USSR was planning imminent attack on the PRC. Now the Peking tacticians had chosen to suggest that the future theatre of war would be in the Atlantic region—the sector viewed by the United States as vital to its national security.

In that August 1973 report, Chou provided what was in-

The New York Times

Mao and Chou En-lai in 1952

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ferentially Mao's justification of the PRC's studied rapprochement with the United States: "necessary compromises between revolutionary countries and imperialist countries must be distinguished from collusion and compromise between Soviet revisionism and U.S. imperialism." The existing relationship with the United States was, then—a "necessary compromise."

But definitive confirmation of the content of Peking's grand strategy came in 1975. It is hardly open to doubt that the Peking leadership viewed the Nguyen Van Thieu regime in Saigon as nonviable and, without American military forces for its defense, doomed to destruction by "the people's war." Strategic decisions would be influenced accordingly. And in his report on governmental affairs to the Fourth National People's Congress at Peking in January 1975, Premier Chou disclosed his (and Mao's) assessment of the state of Chinese and world affairs. He pointed up the national goal: the achievement, by the end of the century, of the modernization of agriculture, industry and the national defense, as well as of science and technology, "in a way to bring our national economy into the first ranks of the world." Chou did not neglect the superpowers. He reported that "there exist fundamental differences between China and the United States." Remarking that Sino-American relations had been improved "in a certain measure" over the past three years, he said that those relations could be improved further still, "assuming that the various principles proclaimed in the Sino-American communiqué of Shanghai are scrupulously put into effect." Notoriously, one "principle" still waiting upon implementation is that in which the two countries agree that Taiwan and the mainland are one. Chou referred specifically to the Taiwan issue in his speech:

> We will liberate Taiwan! Let our compatriots of Taiwan and our entire people unite and work in conjunction in order to attain this noble objective: to liberate Taiwan and reunite the fatherland.

There was no suggestion that Peking intended to wait upon American charity in that regard.

In sum and substance, Chou's expressed attitude with respect to the United States promised a qualified continuation of the present line of "necessary compromise." As for the USSR, his strictures were appreciably milder than those he had addressed to that "social imperialist" at the Tenth Party Congress in 1973—and also qualified. He said:

> The governing clique of the Soviet Union have [*sic*] betrayed Marxism-Leninism, and our debate with them on matters of principle will go on for a long time. However, we have always held that this debate should not obstruct the maintenance of normal state relations between China and the Soviet Union.

But it was his generalizations that reflected contemporary Chinese grand strategy:

> The capitalist world is facing the most serious economic crisis since the war, and all the basic contradictions in the world are sharpening. On the one hand, the trend of revolution by the people of the world is actively developing. On the other hand, the contention for world hegemony between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, is becoming more and more intense. . . . Their fierce contention is bound to lead to world war some day. . . . At present, the factors for both revolution and war are increasing. Whether war gives rise to revolution or revolution prevents war, in either case the international situation will develop in a direction favorable to the people and the future of the world will be bright.

Asserting that the Chinese nation should ally itself with "all the forces in the world that can be allied with to combat colonialism, imperialism and above all superpower hegemonism," Chou held more particularly that "China is a developing country belonging to the Third World. We should enhance our unity with the countries and people of Asia, Africa and Latin America. . . ."

In sum, although there had been radical changes in the Asian political situation, the basic premises and propositions of the Chinese grand strategy remained essentially as outlined ten years earlier. Developments in the year that elapsed from the time Chou spoke until he died this month can only have consolidated Chinese thinking in this regard. The defeat of the United States in Indochina was completed with the Communist victories in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in March-May 1975. In the wake of that defeat, the United States shifted its strategic emphasis to Northeast Asia, a Chinese "sphere of interest" surpassing even Southeast Asia in importance to Peking. By this move, it can only have confirmed Peking in its estimate that the "American connection" does not at present provide the PRC with fruitful possibilities for exploitation—and that it might offer even less in the future. Assuming that Chinese strategy remains based on the concept of a growing confrontation between the Third World and the "imperialist camp," and also between the "superpowers," the PRC will logically be caused to refrain, at the least, from close alignment with the United States. It is significant that President Ford evidently got little more of substance from his December visit to Peking than a warning on the "perils" of détente.

The answer to the original question with respect to what effect Chou's death might have on the future course of Sino-American relations thus becomes reasonably clear: it will probably have none, excepting in nuances, because China's foreign affairs course is firmly fixed within the framework of Maoist grand strategy. However, if the spirit of Chou persists, the implementation of that strategy will be pragmatic, and cautious, in the quarter century ahead. The PRC's leadership professes to believe that war between the United States and the Soviet Union is almost certain, but plainly it does not propose to provoke war between *China* and either of the "superpowers"; it would plan to "sit on the mountain and watch the tigers fight," to China's presumed political profit. But if there is no "world" war, according to the Maoist thesis it will be because revolution will have intervened, still to the benefit of "the people" and of the PRC. Meanwhile, China will proceed along the road of "necessary compromise" with "imperialism," guided by *its* definition of "peaceful coexistence," for such incidental gains as it may secure in either political or economic terms.

The official obituary of Premier Chou En-lai seized the occasion to exhort the army, party and nation to "build China into a powerful modern socialist country and win

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victory for the cause of communism." A good part of Chou's legacy to China is the pragmatism with which he endeavored to promote his country's objectives. In future, depending upon developments, some of the PRC's domestic and foreign goals may well prove to be mutually incompatible, and the nation's leaders may be forced to choose which to serve. In certain circumstances, particularly after the death of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the pragmatism of Premier Chou could dictate better relations with one or even both of the "superpowers" than is contemplated by the present Maoist grand strategy. For, as an ancient Chinese proverb has it, "The ways of the world are like a sheep's intestine"—that is, a little complicated. And "necessary compromises" are many. □

HELMS OF NORTH CAROLINA

RONALD REAGAN'S RIGHT GUARD

MARK PINSKY

Raleigh, N.C.

Sen. Jesse Helms (R., N.C.) voted against confirmation of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State on the ground that he was too liberal. He is so far out beyond what normally passes for a conservative position in Congress that he might be ignored as just another obscure, ineffectual legislator, of interest only as a quaint regional buffoon who passes out six-packs of North Carolina pickles to all members of the Senate. But he is the man chosen by Ronald Reagan to run his primary campaign in what is acknowledged to be one of the most crucial early contests in the South. A poor showing by Gerald Ford in the North Carolina primary, since it comes less than a month after New Hampshire and two weeks after Florida, might prove to be the third strike against the President. As if to underline the significance of the contest, Mr. Ford has chosen North Carolina Gov. James Holshouser Jr. to be Southern coordinator of his campaign.

For state Republicans, the race between Helms-Reagan and Holshouser-Ford is more than a Presidential popularity contest. It is the latest round in a four-year battle for control of the state GOP that has already included bruising struggles over the party chairmanship (held by Holshouser himself until his election in 1972) and the 1974 U.S. Senate nomination.

In North Carolina, Republican politics is geography and economics as much as it is ideology. Governor Holshouser represents the traditional, mountain Republicanism of the western section of the state, which has remained faithful to the GOP since the Civil War. Ideologically it is moderate and most of its financial backing comes from the state's furniture industry. Senator Helms speaks for the more agrarian, eastern section of the state, many of whose partisans are, like the Senator, relatively recent converts to the party from the extreme right wing of the Democrats. Their position is ultraconservative and their backing comes in large measure from the tobacco industry. Geographically at the center, and tipping the balance in this and other electoral contests, is the urban and suburban Piedmont section of North Carolina, dominated by white-collar and middle-management executives who have migrated to the state in the past decade from the Northeast and Midwest. The industry caught in the middle, and unsure of which way to jump, is textiles, the state's largest.

Haynie, The Courier-Journal (Louisville)

The Reagan-Ford contest is already seen as a highly personalized test of strength between Helms and Holshouser, both of whom have a great deal at stake. If Holshouser—heretofore regarded as an amiable lightweight—can deliver North Carolina and the South for Ford, he would be a natural ticket-balancing Vice Presidential nominee. His aides have let it be known for the past year that he plans to challenge Helms in the 1978 Senatorial primary.

Helms's investment is considerably more problematical, both for himself and the Reagan candidacy. His pronounced anti-unionism will have little effect in the local Presidential race, since North Carolina ranks last among the states in percentage of organized workers (and, not coincidentally, last also in average hourly industrial wages). The same holds true for Senator Helms's alleged anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, as well as for his reputation as a virulent and unreconstructed white racist. There are comparatively few Jewish votes, and most of the blacks in the state vote in the Democratic primary. Nationally, however, these extreme attitudes may cause Reagan some embarrassment.

Of considerably more interest locally is what Helms is

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likely to do in the event that Reagan does not win the Republican nomination. Until he became an active Reagan booster, the Senator was one of the most vociferous advocates of a new, conservative third-party movement, referring to the GOP as a "dodo bird." After his first year in Washington, the Democrat turned Republican boasted to an A.P. interviewer, "I don't consider myself as a Republican or Democratic Senator."

At the organization's founding convention in February 1975, Helms was named to head the Committee on Conservative Alternatives (COCA). At that time a Helms aide, John Carbough, said: "The important thing is to make sure that in all fifty states there is a place on the ballot for an independent candidate." COCA has now been replaced by the Committee for a New Majority, led by *National Review* publisher William Rusher, but the work of COCA, including registration with the Federal Election Commission, has quietly gone forward.

Last August, Helms told an enthusiastic convention of the Young Americans for Freedom that a conservative third party was indeed viable: "it's like a train waiting at the station to begin." Before Vice President Rockefeller was dumped from the 1976 ticket (a move credited to Governor Holshouser), Helms, when asked whether he could support a Ford-Rockefeller ticket, replied that it "would depend upon the nature of the conservative alternative."

This dubious party loyalty has already become an issue in the Ford-Reagan contest, with an aide to Governor Holshouser raising (anonymously) the third-party issue in a statewide newsletter mailed to registered Republicans. Senator Helms charged that the issue was a "smoke screen." Nevertheless, he has refused to make any ironclad pledges regarding 1976 should Reagan not be nominated, despite the former California Governor's own pledge not to run on any other ticket. Helms even admitted that the head of the American Independent Party had sounded him out as a potential national candidate. He says that he had declined, but in the event that neither Reagan nor George Wallace is on a major party ticket, and if neither undertakes an independent candidacy, it is just possible that a clamoring constituency of conservatives might convince Jesse Helms to accept a place on a national ticket. And, regardless of the outcome of the 1976 contests, he may decide to run for re-election in 1978 as an independent (as may also Sen. Harry Byrd of Virginia and James Buckley of New York), wherein his chances for survival might be greater than in a Republican primary against Governor Holshouser.

Jesse Helms made a name for himself between 1962 and 1972, first as an on-camera editorialist (he was in television before he was in the Senate), and later as a candidate, by providing an "outspoken" yet respectable voice for the darker side of the citizens of North Carolina on matters of race, war and peace, social welfare and general intolerance. In fact, a careful reading of the transcripts of his accumulated television editorials (they were distributed statewide beyond his viewing area as a weekly newspaper column and a syndicated radio commentary) reveals a glib but shallow approach to most of his targets, with a pervasive mean-spiritedness throughout. He was notably careless about notifying targets of his attacks and offering them rebuttal time. The most racist, reactionary and inflammatory of his observations were quotes of dubious origin from unknown, unidentified or anonymous individuals, with Helms rarely saying whether he agreed or not. Thus he made his point without having to accept the responsibility.

That has always been Helms's hallmark as a practicing politician. It is the same approach that was used in the infamous 1950 Senatorial campaign between Sen. Frank P. Graham, former president of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and textile executive Willis Smith. Smith's successful campaign, under the direction of the young Jesse Helms, became a textbook example of innuendo, redbaiting and race-baiting. Helms used the same tactics again in two successful Democratic campaigns for the Raleigh City Council in the 1950s, and in his 1972 Republican race for the U.S. Senate. There is no reason to expect that his campaigns this year and in the years to come, on behalf of Ronald Reagan or Jesse Helms, will be any different. □

SKIRMISH ON CAPITOL HILL

How the Poor Got a Lucky Break

IRIC NATHANSON

Washington

"IRS may have a check for you . . . even if you didn't have to pay federal income tax in 1975." Starting in January, many low-income people will find this unusual message in their pay envelopes. The Internal Revenue Service is embarking on a campaign to locate an estimated 8 million people who are eligible for a new kind of tax break known as the earned income credit.

This new device, also known as a "work bonus," was adopted last spring as part of the 1975 Tax Reduction Act. It will provide up to $1.4 billion in tax cuts and direct federal payments to eligible families—those earning less than $8,000 a year with dependent children under the age of 19. Eligible recipients will have the amount of the credit, to a maximum of $400, subtracted from the taxes they owe for 1975. If the credit is larger than the tax, they will receive a check to cover the difference. Those who pay no tax at all will receive the full credit in cash. Thus, the earned income credit represents a step, albeit a small one,

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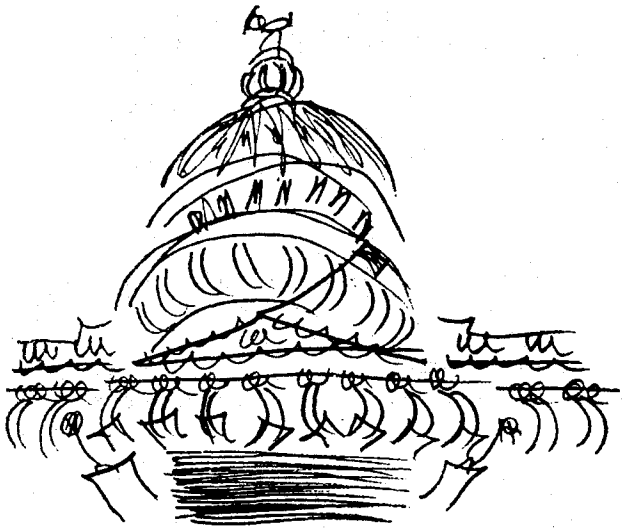

toward a negative income tax and the use of the federal tax system as an income support mechanism.

If the move is wholesome, it was also to a large extent accidental—the result of political skirmishing and Congressional one-upmanship of the sort characteristic of Capitol Hill in its more Byzantine moments. And as a tax measure, it is assured of only the briefest life; unless reinforced by further legislation, it will expire in mid-1976. Its sponsors, to say nothing of its beneficiaries by the millions, have more hard work to do.

Last spring, when the 1975 tax-cut bill was before Congress, its provision for the earned income credit drew the ire of some House and Senate Republicans. North Carolina's James Martin denounced it on the floor of the House as a "free lunch" which had no place in a tax bill. Outside Congress, columnist Patrick Buchanan declared angrily that the credit was really welfare reform in disguise, foisted on the country by the McGovern wing of the Democratic Party.

Buchanan was wrong. The credit was not the handiwork of Congressional liberals, but of Russell Long, a member of the Senate's conservative establishment and chairman of its Finance Committee. The Louisiana Senator had long advocated a refundable credit as a way "to provide relief for people who are too poor to pay income tax, but who still pay Social Security taxes and bear the burden of the Social Security tax paid by the employers."

While liberals could not claim paternity for the credit, they were nonetheless quick to praise it. *New York Times* columnist Tom Wicker saw it as "the beginning of a new and long-overdue course for American liberalism—toward a policy of income redistribution."

Wicker's enthusiasm was evidently not shared by President Ford. The President, who had never wanted the credit, eliminated it from his 1976 tax plan but neglected to tell anyone. The administration's tax proposal, released on October 6, did not mention that the credit was being dropped. Only by reading an obscure footnote in the Treasury Department's 42-page report could the working poor have learned that Mr. Ford wanted to put an end to the one provision in the 1975 Act designed specifically to benefit them.

For a while, it looked as if the President might get his way. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Al Ullman, largely for tactical reasons, decided to drop the credit from the bill which extended the 1975 tax cuts into 1976. Ullman was reasonably sure that Senator Long would see to it that the "work bonus" was restored when the tax bill reached the upper house. Thus, by adopting the President's position. Ullman figured to accumulate some bargaining chips to use in conference with Long. The full House accepted Ullman's strategy and the tax-cut extension bill that cleared the House in early December did not include an extension of the earned income credit. (Interestingly enough, while refusing to extend the credit into 1976, the House did agree to include a provision in its bill enabling welfare recipients to take full advantage of the 1975 credit.)

Last spring, Long had emerged as the champion of the working poor by sponsoring the "work bonus." But Long, who is not soft on poverty, wanted to make sure that only the "worthy" poor would gain from this new tax provision. People on welfare he considered unworthy, so he persuaded his Finance Committee to include an amendment in the 1975 Senate tax-cut bill which said that working welfare recipients would have their Aid to Families with Dependent Children payments cut back by an amount equal to any earned income credit they might receive. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts, who fought unsuccessfully on the Senate floor to eliminate the Long amendment, pointed out that it would mean that the federal government merely took away with one hand what it had just given with the other. Brooke went on to say that the Long provision punished "poor people on government assistance who work and who are attempting to better their own lives." Long responded by saying that, if his amendment were dropped, people would be encouraged to come on to the welfare rolls so that they could get AFDC *and* the earned income credit.

The Long amendment was eventually eliminated in conference. However, it was not replaced by language that specifically instructed state welfare departments to disregard the credit. As a result, under a directive from HEW, most state welfare agencies were last fall preparing to count the earned income credit as a resource available to working welfare recipients and thus use it to disqualify some recipients from receiving benefits.

But in November, California's James Corman quietly moved an amendment through the House Ways and Means Committee which said that the credit should not be taken into consideration when determining eligibility or benefit levels under AFDC, Medicaid, food stamps and other federal benefit programs. The amendment was added to the bill that was later to provoke a showdown between Congress and the President over the issue of a 1977 spending ceiling.

Thus, when the House and Senate conferees met to resolve differences over the 1976 tax-cut extension bill just before the Christmas recess, both the earned income extension and the Corman amendment were on the agenda. The House bill contained the "disregard" instruction but,

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thanks to Ullman's strategy, no extension of the credit into 1976; the Senate bill included a six-month extension of the credit but no "disregard."

Once the House conferees had agreed to an extension of the credit, Long said he would accept the Corman amendment, with one qualification: people already on welfare could get the credit without having their benefits cut, but the credit would have to be counted as income by people who were applying for welfare for the first time. The House conferees, in turn, agreed to this compromise, and a six-month extension of the earned income credit into 1976, *plus* a welfare disregard for the 1975 credit, were included in the tax-cut extension bill which President Ford signed into law just before Christmas.

Long had not been expected to modify a position he had taken last spring. However, he knew that there was considerable support in the Senate for the welfare "disregard." Several public interest groups, including Americans for Democratic Action and the Washington Research Action Council, had lobbied effectively for the Corman amendment, and Long knew that he might have to accept a "disregard" in the form of a Senate floor amendment.

For once, the maneuvering between the House and Senate in conference had worked to the advantage of the poor. Long claimed that he had had to accept the Corman amendment, at least in part, in order to get an extension of the earned income credit, while Ullman maintained that he had had to take six more months of the credit so that he could protect the Corman provision.

Now that the battle between Congress and the President over the tax bill has ended, with both sides claiming victory, the working poor will continue to get their "work bonus," at least through June 30, 1976. During the early months of 1976, IRS will be hard at work trying to locate those people who are eligible to receive the earned income credit based on their 1975 income.

If IRS is successful, and the credit does in fact reach those who deserve it, this new tax feature could help pave the way for a full-scale negative income tax system. But it will not do so, indeed it could well have the opposite effect, if it dies on July 1. Moreover, if it is to be kept alive, Congress will have to take the responsibility, for this experiment in social justice is not apt to find a champion in the present administration. □

SAYING NO TO TRIDENT

THE CANADIAN-U.S. COUNTERFORCE

ROBERT C. ALDRIDGE

Santa Clara, Calif.

"Now therefore I, Arthur Phillips, Mayor of the City of Vancouver, do hereby proclaim Trident Concern Week." Citing the Trident submarine and missile system, to be based a mere 60 miles from Canada, as the most destructive weapon in history, Mayor Phillips emphasized the need to think about Trident's disruption of the human environment. As an example, he pointed out that Trident's presence in Puget Sound will make the lower mainland of British Columbia a part of the retaliatory target should the United States carry out its first-use threat with nuclear weapons.

Trident Concern Week (November 24-28) featured lectures and panel discussions, accompanied by intensive media activity. It marked the first popular protest against a U.S. weapon system by Canadian citizens. Climaxing the week was the march of the Trident Monster through downtown Vancouver. Made of bamboo poles strung with rope to depict the length of a Trident submarine—almost as long as two football fields—the Monster flew 408 black pennants in macabre testimony to the number of cities and other targets which the independently dispatched warheads from one submarine can destroy. Onlookers could vividly perceive that deadly potential as the Monster worked its way through city streets. TV cameras captured the spectacle for nationwide viewing.

In "Puget Sound: Missile Target" (*The Nation*, February 1, 1975) I predicted, correctly as it proved, that Pacific Life Community would become a strong opposition force to Trident. It was the two Canadian groups of PLC that organized Trident Concern Week in Victoria and Vancouver. As the week ended, a delegation of their members embarked on a cross-country Trident Trek to raise Canadian consciousness about the world's most frightening weapon. They offered slide presentations, discussions and workshops geared toward organizing nonviolent resistance.

The Trident Trek terminated in Ottawa where New Democratic Party legislator Stuart Leggatt introduced a 10,500-signature petition into the House of Commons. Most of those signatures protesting the Trident base in Puget Sound were collected in the greater Vancouver area by Pacific Life Community. Leggatt urged that Canada consult with the United States over this issue and send representatives to inspect the site. "Canada again seems to be playing a fairly submissive role with the United States," he said. "It's one more piece of evidence that the United States is taking Canada for granted."

However, an incident at the Pacific Highway border crossing suggests that U.S. officials are worried about actions in Canada. One PLC member from Vancouver was refused entry into the United States when he stated truthfully his reasons for visiting the country: to see friends and to take some corrections for a PLC booklet to the printer. The border guard questioned him regarding Pacific Life Community and its philosophy. As the PLC representative opened his briefcase to find the statement of purpose the

Robert Aldridge is a former aerospace engineer with sixteen years' experience designing five generations of sea-based missile systems. He is now a critic of the arms race and his articles have appeared in many publications. He is also a member of Pacific Life Community.

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guard scanned other papers and made notes regarding speakers who would participate in Trident Concern Week. Then, rejecting the statement of purpose as printed in the booklet, the border guard demanded it on PLC letterhead which, obviously, was not available. While all this was going on the guard was making remarks to another patrolman about turning back all these guys who oppose Trident.

Another PLC member from Victoria was hassled in similar fashion, but in that case the border guard backed off when asked to submit in writing his reasons for barring entry. It seems obvious, however, that the State Department has resorted to border surveillance to suppress Canadian opposition to U.S. war-making programs.

But the screening techniques of the border patrol will not prevent the uproar over Trident from spreading into the United States. Pacific Life Community is already well established in Seattle. Its dimensions are transnational, as the statement of purpose indicates:

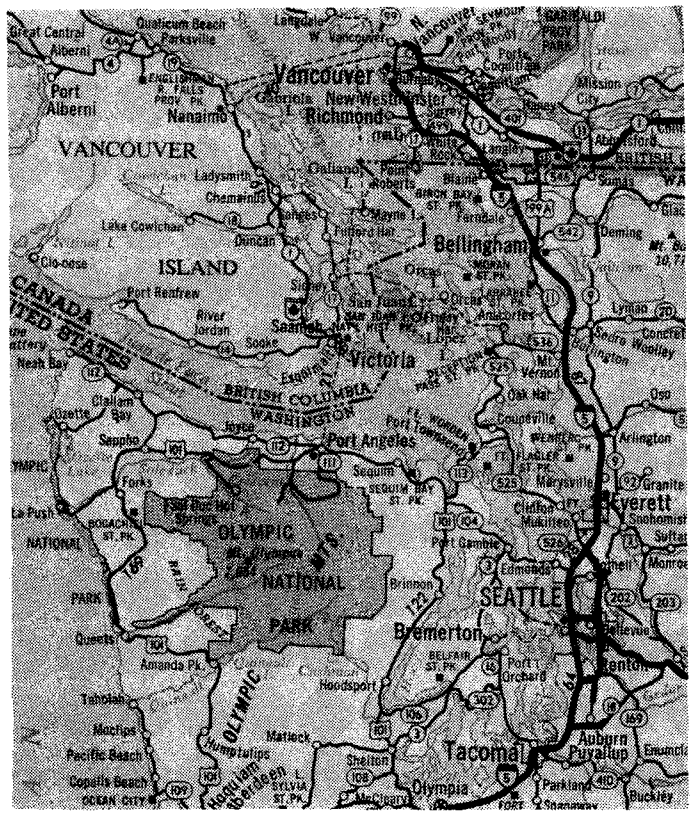
> Pacific Life Community seeks the truth of a nonviolent way of life. We recognize the unity of all life. We affirm the wholeness of each individual and resist the fear and deceit that separates us from our own inner reality. . . . We recognize a special connection with all other peoples of the Pacific and join them in work for a nuclear free zone. We uphold our true identity as world citizens and commit our lives to resisting the militarism, poverty and oppression that threaten our future as a human family.

As a first step toward that goal PLC adopted four immediate objectives: stop the Trident missile-submarine system; make concrete contributions toward respect for international law; build a transnational community of resistance, especially with other peoples of the Pacific; educate toward peace conversion and nonviolence.

Believing civil disobedience to be an integral part of any nonviolent campaign, PLC launched its first direct action last July. Nearly 200 people converged on the future Trident home and about twenty of them "transcended" (as one put it) the barbed-wire fence to plant a vegetable garden on Navy property. Their message was that building Tridents in a world of starving people can only bring closer the day of nuclear war. Media coverage echoed that message to help local people understand the conflict between urgent human needs and American priorities. PLC's continued program of symbolic demonstrations and public information has stimulated other groups to oppose the Trident system.

Farther down the coast, another Pacific Life Community group has sprung up to oppose the Trident missile being manufactured by Lockheed at the southern tip of San Francisco Bay. Lockheed, after slipping temporarily to second rung on the defense contracting ladder, has once again gained the top by cornering the Trident missile job. The $2.08 billion it received in prime Pentagon contracts last year was 5.25 per cent of the total granted to all U.S. companies. It was a third more than what the next closest contender received.

With the slogan, "Yes to Life, No to Trident," Pacific Life Community has conducted leafletting and vigils at California defense plants along with slide shows and educational forums for community groups. It works with



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other groups of similar interest to establish communication with defense workers and enlist their help in discovering alternatives to the military contracting economy. As with their northern counterparts, PLC people around San Francisco Bay are just getting started. Intensive activity is planned for the future. Even so, PLC has become a recognizable force for justice in its first year of existence. Besides becoming known on the West Coast, it has established links with other Pacific peoples on Hawaii, Guam, Saipan, Fiji and New Zealand, as well as Japan and the Philippines.

But probably the biggest reason Pacific Life Community has become a nemesis to Trident and associated corporate profits is that it is springing from deep roots. Members believe that overcoming violence begins with facing the Trident within themselves, whether that Trident be the death-dealing source of their income, an affluent and exploitive way of life, indifference to suffering friends and global neighbors, or in whatever manner their self-interests reject the human family. Only when able to respond sincerely to these inner Tridents do PLC people believe they can face the world-destructive Trident to be based in Puget Sound. But putting exterior actions in harmony with inner conscience is not easy amid the paranoia of today's society. That is why nonviolence presupposes the courage to suffer more for peace than is often the case in war.

Finally, Pacific Life Community sees nonviolence as a power which, if lived deeply enough, can begin a chain reaction in humanity much more powerful than the chain reaction of a Trident warhead. From these roots can spring the responsible behavior that may move this country from profiteering to fulfillment, from competition to cooperation, from greed to concern. In short, *from Trident to Life.* □

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ARMS FOR THE SHAH

HOIST WITH OUR OWN PAHLAVI

MICHAEL T. KLARE

It is easy to be overwhelmed by the range and magnitude of the arms purchases of the Shah of Iran. Even a few specific purchases are enough to suggest the scope of recent Iranian acquisitions: 261 F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers ($1.3 billion); 141 F-5E Tiger-II fighters ($285 million); eighty F-14 Tomcat swing-wing fighters ($1.85 billion); fifty C-130 Hercules transport jets ($203 million); 2,616 Sparrow air-to-air missiles ($522 million); 202 Sea Cobra helicopter gun ships . . . the list seems endless. Arnaud de Borchgrave of *Newsweek* summarized the impression one gets: "Teheran's brass has been buying up military hardware from the United States . . . the way most people stock up on a week's supply of groceries at a supermarket." But a shopping spree is scarcely the full story: what needs to be appreciated is the nature of these arms and their potential military employment.

America's military sales to Iran are striking not only for their quantity and value (more than 667 planes and 505 helicopters in ten years, with total orders exceeding $10 billion) but for their variety and sophistication. The Shah has acquired fighter-bombers, aerial tankers, sophisticated reconnaissance planes, helicopter gun ships, submarines, destroyers, air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground missiles, "smart bombs"—in short, "everything but the atomic bomb" (to quote one State Department official). Moreover, he has selected weapons that are more advanced than those used by most NATO armies, and has ordered some experimental items—like the Harpoon anti-ship missile—that are still being tested for use by America's own forces.

The growing U.S. military relationship with Iran is not limited to weapons sales, moreover, but includes a host of other services. With the blessing of the State Department, U.S. arms firms have agreed to set up defense plants in Iran, while many "retired" U.S. officers have been hired by Teheran to provide specialized training for Iranian military and paramilitary forces. Thus Grumman will deploy a force of more than 2,000 engineers and technicians to provide support for the Shah's eighty Tomcats, and 1,500 former GIs employed by Bell Helicopter are helping to shape an Iranian "Sky Cavalry Brigade" modeled on America's airmobile First Cavalry Division.

These sales and training programs are helping to transform Iran from a third-rate military power into a major actor in the world political arena. The Shah intends to make Iran the world's sixth most powerful nation by 1980 (after the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan and France), and many experts believe he can do it. His country is already the leading power in the Persian Gulf area, and the delivery of six ultramodern *Spruance*-class destroyers and three former U.S. Navy submarines will make it a major power in the Indian Ocean as well. With the six Boeing aerial tankers now being supplied by the United States, the Shah's air-refuelable Phantom jets can reach Cairo or New Delhi from their bases in Iran. These developments have caused considerable alarm in India, and compelled many of Iran's Arab neighbors to acquire major new weapons of their own.

In defending the massive U.S. arms shipments to Teheran, administration officials insist that Iran needs such weapons to protect its oil shipping in the Persian Gulf and to guard its territory against possible Iraqi or Soviet assaults. "Iran's military requirements are based on Iran's concern for the security of its northern border with the USSR and its western border with Iraq," Richard Violette of the Defense Security Assistance Agency testified in 1974. But critics point out that Iran already has twice the air power and sea power of all other Persian Gulf states combined, and that many new Iranian acquisitions—like the *Spruance*-class destroyers and the aerial tankers—have no conceivable defensive use.

By building up the military power of Iran, will America not set off a major arms race in the Persian Gulf and thus further destabilize an already volatile area? Moreover, by providing Iran with such sophisticated weapons, are we not encouraging the Shah's political ambitions and thus stimulating an Iranian drive to dominate the Middle East—with the attendant risk of full-scale war? Finally, by stationing so many U.S. technicians and advisers at Iranian military bases, are we not running the risk of direct U.S. involvement in any regional conflict? The answers to such questions are to be had by understanding U.S. objectives in the Persian Gulf and analyzing the U.S. arms transfers to Iran and the training arrangements there.

Iran has been getting arms and training from the United States since the late 1940s, but a turning point came in January 1968, when Prime Minister Harold Wilson announced that London would remove all British forces "east of Suez" by the end of 1971. Wilson's declaration generated considerable alarm in Washington, since it had always been assumed that Britain would remain the dominant "police" power in the Persian Gulf, even though U.S. oil investments there had long since surpassed those of Great Britain. In the view of American strategists, the British withdrawal would create a "power vacuum" that would inevitably be filled by Moscow and its Arab allies—thus threatening the West's access to the oil reserves. It was imperative, therefore, that the potential "vacuum" be filled as quickly as possible—for, as an influential Georgetown University report noted, "the strategic interests of the non-Communist world would be in grave jeopardy if freedom of movement in and out of the Gulf were curtailed or denied."

When President Nixon assumed office in 1969, he ordered the National Security Council to develop policy recommendations for the Persian Gulf situation. The

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alternatives were obvious: the United States could step in and assume the British role as big-power policeman, or it could convert local powers into regional gendarmes. But since America was bogged down in Vietnam and overextended elsewhere, and since, in view of our growing importance as a source of arms for Israel, a conspicuous U.S. presence in the Gulf would be opposed by most Arab governments, the choice was for all practical purposes foreordained: Iran and Saudi Arabia would be transformed into local police powers with arms, advisers and technical assistance furnished by the United States. "What we decided," Under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco later testified, "was that we would try to stimulate and be helpful to the two key countries in this area—namely, Iran and Saudi Arabia—that, to the degree that we could stimulate cooperation between these two countries, they could become the major elements of stability as the British were getting out."

Although Sisco and other administration spokesmen propose an equal role for Iran and Saudi Arabia in official statements, it is clear that Washington intends Teheran to bear the major burden of this strategy. Iran has four times the population of Saudi Arabia, and its armed forces are correspondingly larger (240,000 men to 43,000). And, while Saudi Arabia has the largest oil reserves in the world, Iran's oil began to be exploited earlier and thus Teheran has a significant lead in the development of a modern military-industrial infrastructure.

More important than any of these factors, however, is the political agility of the Shah. In the twenty-two years that he has controlled Iran's foreign policy, Iran has moved from a "regionally defensive position" based on the ill-fated Baghdad Pact to one of world prominence. He has established a cordial relationship with the Soviet Union, while simultaneously moving into closer partnership with the United States. He has succeeded in strengthening Iran's ties with the Arab world, while maintaining an informal alliance with Israel. And, at the 1975 OPEC summit in Algiers, he even patched up his bitter feud with the Ba'ath regime in Iraq and thus stabilized his most combustible border problems. As a result of these achievements, says Leonard Binder in a recent Rand memorandum, Iran's international position has been transformed from one of "ludicrous heroic posing" to one of substantial political and military significance.

The Shah has been able to transform Iran's position, according to Binder, because he has established a "high degree of domestic political tranquillity." As anyone familiar with conditions in Iran knows, he has done so by brutally suppressing all opposition and by using Iran's abundant oil reserves to purchase the loyalty of the military, the technocrats and the fast-growing middle class. "Iranian society is like a pyramid," *U.S. News & World Report* observed in 1973, "with the Shah at the apex and the army a privileged caste." Those who support the regime (or at least appear to do so in public) are rewarded with high salaries and other privileges; those who criticize it are quickly silenced.

From time to time the Shah has declared that he will restore the great Persian Empire. Already he has employed his new military prowess to secure a dominant role in the Persian Gulf—in 1972 he seized three strategic islands in the Strait of Hormuz which belong to the United Arab Emirates—and he has made no secret of his ambition to extend Iranian power into the Indian Ocean and the world at large. "By 1976," he predicted in 1971, "the Iranian armed forces will reach such a qualitative progress that they will definitely be taken into account on an international scale." Although the Shah stresses the peaceful intent of his objectives, Iran's overseas drive has been spearheaded by the military: his forces are engaged in a bitter counterinsurgency struggle in Oman, and his "presence" in the Indian Ocean will be established by the six new destroyers and three submarines on order from the United States.

Whether or not Shah Pahlavi attains his ambition to become a major Indian Ocean power, he has already fulfilled Washington's objective of replacing Great Britain as the major police power in the Persian Gulf. With its four ultramodern British frigates, three reconditioned U.S. destroyers and other new weapons, the Iranian Navy is now the uncontested guardian of Persian Gulf shipping. This build-up has been accompanied, moreover, by diplomatic moves designed to legitimize Iranian domination: in January 1975, the Shah signed a mutual defense pact with the Sultan of Oman providing for joint naval patrols in the strategic Strait of Hormuz. (Since Oman has no real warships, this amounts to *de facto* recognition of Iranian supremacy.) And, while Teheran insists that it will not interfere with the "innocent passage" of commercial shipping through the strait, it has served notice that it will not permit entry to what it deems hostile parties.

All this must be highly gratifying to the American strategists who orchestrated the expansion of Iranian might, but the new power equation in the Persian Gulf is not unalterable. U.S. strategy is based on the premise of Iranian and Saudi cooperation, but it is all too likely that Pahlavi's ambitions will some day provoke a conflict with neighboring Arab states.

Given the danger of internecine warfare in the Gulf area, one may be sure that Pentagon strategists have taken steps to provide the United States with some control over military developments there. Thus, a complete tally of U.S. objectives under the arms program reads as follows:

(*1*) To convert Iran into a local superpower that can suppress any threats to the *status quo* in the Persian Gulf and thus assure continued U.S. access to the area's petroleum.

(*2*) To enhance the internal security capabilities of the Iranian Government and to foster close working relations with the Iranian military.

(*3*) To intensify Iranian dependence on U.S. military technology, thereby providing Washington with *de facto* control over Iranian military operations.

By taking an inventory of the specific arms and equipment sold to Iran, one can show how these objectives shape the weapons trade.

The first thing everyone notices about Iranian arms purchases is their huge *quantities*. During 1974 and 1975 alone, the Shah ordered 400 modern warplanes, 500 helicopters, 730 tanks, eighteen warships and thousands of air-to-air, air-to-ground, ground-to-air, anti-tank and anti-ship missiles. Even in a period of profligate arms spending

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in the Middle East, these quantities are unmatched. During the same period, Saudi Arabia ordered only 185 new warplanes, 150 tanks and a handful of missiles, helicopters and patrol boats. Iraq—usually considered Iran's principal antagonist in the area—acquired even fewer arms. Since Iran was more powerful than each of its Arab neighbors *before* the current build-up, delivery of these new weapons will give it an overwhelming advantage in any local conflict.

The next most striking characteristic of the Shah's arms program is the wide *variety* of weapons he has selected. He has ordered surface ships, submarines, planes, helicopters, tanks, artillery, missiles and an array of more exotic gear. Within each category, moreover, there is a wide range of capabilities, suggesting Iran's determination to prepare itself for conflicts ranging all the way from counter-guerrilla warfare to full-scale conventional war.

At the lower end of the military spectrum, for instance, the Shah has picked the best of America's Vietnam-tested counterinsurgency hardware. Purchases include everything from the AH-1J Sea Cobra helicopter gun ship—originally developed on a crash basis to provide treetop fire support for U.S. infantrymen—to laser-guided munitions ("smart bombs"), which were credited with many of the direct hits on enemy installations during the final months of the war. Many of these weapons will be delivered to the Iranian Sky Cavalry Brigade, itself modeled on the U.S. First Air Cavalry Division (airmobile) of Vietnam War fame.

At the upper end of the military spectrum are Iran's impressive force of 1,900 tanks (American M-47s and M-60s, and British Chieftains and Scorpions), 500 warplanes and forty-one combat ships (figures include items on order but not yet delivered). These front-line weapons are complemented by an impressive array of backup and support systems, including air-defense missiles (Hawk, Rapier and Tigercat), surveillance and reconnaissance planes (the P-3C Orion and RF-4 Phantom), transport planes and aerial tankers, and a variety of anti-tank and anti-ship missiles. This versatility, plus the emphasis on precision-guided tactical missiles, suggests that the Shah has studied the results of the October 1973 Middle East war closely and is determined to field an army sufficiently powerful to triumph in any similar confrontation.

Another outstanding feature of the Iranian arms program is the heavy emphasis on advanced, *high-technology* weapons. The Shah is an avid reader of military trade journals ("Some men take *Playboy* to bed," one American observer has noted, "the Shah reads *Aviation Week*"), and he has consistently sought the latest military hardware. Thus Iran had a sizable fleet of Hovercraft long before most major powers even began experimenting with such craft, and Iran's helicopter force is considerably more advanced than that of most NATO countries. When American newspapers first reported the success of "smart bombs" in Vietnam, the Shah immediately ordered 1,500 "laser-guided bomb kits" for his 500- and 1,000-pound bombs, and later hired the Hughes Aircraft Co. to build an "electro-optical facility" in Iran for the manufacture and assembly of precision-guided battlefield missiles.

Topping off the list of the Shah's advance-technology purchases is the swing-wing F-14 Tomcat—a plane so complex and costly that the U.S. Navy has been forced to reduce its planned purchase from 710 aircraft to 390. When armed with the complementary AIM-54 Phoenix air-to-air missile system, the Tomcat becomes "the most expensive, sophisticated weapon ever sold to any other country," according to John Finney of *The New York Times*. When the Shah first expressed interest in the F-14 in 1973, few observers believed that the United States would agree to export the Phoenix missile system, even if the sale of the plane itself were approved. What inducements Pahlavi offered President Nixon to release the missile will probably never be known; some observers have suggested a covert Iranian contribution to Nixon's re-election campaign or other gratuities, but a more likely explanation is that the Navy was desperate to secure foreign orders for the Tomcat—thus reducing the cost per plane and softening Congressional resistance to its own expensive F-14 program.

Considerable controversy has also surrounded the Shah's purchases of the six *Spruance*-class (DD-963) destroyers and three *Tang*-class submarines. At 7,800 tons, the DD-963s are heavy vessels—with more than twice the displacement of America's World War II destroyers and equal in weight to Soviet light cruisers. Opponents of the $700-million *Spruance* sale, led by Rep. Les Aspin (D., Wis.), argue that the vessel has no conceivable defense function in the Persian Gulf proper (where the largest Iraqi and Saudi warships are patrol boats and minesweepers), and presumably is intended for the Indian Ocean, where it will certainly arouse the antagonism of India. Nor can the *Tang*-class submarines be used in the Persian Gulf—the water is too shallow to permit underwater passage—and they too are expected to appear in the Indian Ocean.

Besides quantity, variety and sophistication, the other major characteristic of Iranian arms purchases is the high proportion of distinctly offensive systems. Most weapons can of course be used both offensively and defensively, but some are particularly suited to one or the other role. Thus while we cannot necessarily imply an offensive motivation for Iran's heavy purchases of tanks, warplanes and missiles (although the large numbers involved suggest an intention other than defense), certain systems would seem superfluous in a military establishment designed primarily for territorial and maritime defense. These include, first of all, *Spruance*-class destroyers, which are armed for coastal bombardment and anti-shipping attacks as well as for anti-submarine warfare. Another anomaly is the very large force of F-4 fighter-bombers, which are designed primarily for deep-penetration air strikes, a capability enhanced by Iran's fleet of six aerial tankers (six more are on order) which extend the Phantom's operational range to 1,400 miles—permitting attacks on Cairo, New Delhi and Istanbul. Even more striking are the Shah's Hovercraft, which have no defensive function whatsoever and can be used only for amphibious assaults on other Gulf states.

What does all this reveal about Iran's military policies and America's strategic objectives? First of all, the Shah's military procurement program has not been shaped exclusively by defensive considerations, as suggested by U.S. officials, but includes a significant offensive impulse. This becomes even more obvious when Iranian capabilities

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Haynie, The Courier-Journal (Louisville)

American Peace Corps, 1976 Model

are compared to those of Iraq and Saudi Arabia—the only other major military powers in the Gulf area.

If defense is not the only concern underlying Iranian military planning, what can be surmised about other possible intentions? It is apparent from what has been said that Teheran is developing a capacity for sustained intervention on the Arab side of the Gulf and along Iran's eastern border, and concomitantly, for a big-power Iranian role in the northwestern Indian Ocean. These findings are consistent with the Shah's oft-repeated pledge to keep revolutionary forces out of the Gulf and to help maintain the integrity of the Pakistani state as now constituted. That, in Teheran's view, requires a sufficient Iranian capability to counter or deter Iraqi or Indian intervention on behalf of the insurgents, and thus it has acquired the long-range strike forces described above.

If one can arrive at these conclusions by studying currently available information, top government officials must long since have come to similar conclusions. Indeed, Washington must approve every piece of weaponry transferred to Iran.

This strategy involves considerable risks. While the Iranian intervention in Oman represents the perfect expression of Washington's intentions, an Iranian-Saudi or Iranian-Indian conflict would be a disaster. It is safe to assume, therefore, that U.S. strategists have developed assorted contingency plans to head off or mitigate such a catastrophe, and the data on sales of sophisticated arms suggest what one of these measures is likely to be: a threat to cut off the supply of spare parts and technical services without which such high-technology weapons cannot be used. By providing Teheran with an ever increasing array of sophisticated arms, Washington increases Iran's dependence on spare parts and technical skills which are available only from suppliers in the United States. For instance, it takes an inventory of 70,000 spare parts to keep a wing of F-4 Phantoms operational under wartime conditions. Thus, by threatening to cut off the "pipelines" of parts and services, Washington gains a form of veto power over Iranian military operations.

Iran's deepening dependency on U.S. technical skills was highlighted in September 1975, when the Pentagon's top logistics troubleshooter, Erich von Marbod, was sent to Teheran on an emergency mission to unsnarl what the columnist Jack Anderson called "the worst military foul-up in peacetime history." Von Marbod's job, according to Anderson, is to break up the monumental supply bottlenecks caused by the Shah's excessive arms spending and the lack of Iranian mechanics. "Mountains of munitions are piling up on Iranian docks and fields. Planes, helicopters and other sophisticated weapons are left in crates for weeks, waiting to be assembled." The Pentagon had previously assigned 2,000 military advisers to help train the Iranians to operate and service the new equipment, "but the U.S. technicians can't teach the Iranians the necessary skills as fast as the supplies are dumped on them." Von Marbod's only practical option, therefore, is to send still more American technicians and bureaucrats to perform the necessary tasks.

However successful the U.S. arms program has been in converting Iran into a regional police power, it has not accomplished its other advertised objective of reducing the U.S. military presence in the Gulf area. Whether as instructors, technicians, engineers or advisers, U.S. military personnel are streaming into Iran in record numbers. The Pentagon reported in February 1975 that 2,100 Americans were working in Iran under the Foreign Military Sales program, and this number is expected to go much, much higher as U.S. firms begin delivering all the complex arms Teheran ordered. Since technical support work accounts for 60 per cent or more of the contract value of all major U.S. arms agreements, the $15 billion spent by Iran on U.S. arms in recent years will result in service contracts worth as much as $9 billion. Ultimately, as many as 15,000 American GIs and contractor personnel will be stationed in Iran.

The growing demand for technical services has spurred the formation of a new corps of "white-collar mercenaries" who sell their engineering and managerial expertise rather than traditional military skills. All told, the Defense Department administered some twenty-five major "technical service contracts" in Iran as of February 1975. These included everything from a one-year, $400,000 Hughes contract for "assistance and support on the air-to-surface missile," to the mammoth $255-million Bell contract to "train 1,500 helicopter pilots and 5,000 mechanics, and to develop a logistics system and depot overhaul facility" for the 489 Bell helicopters ordered by Iran in 1973.

U.S. support personnel are concentrated in all major technology-based activities: communications, logistics, aircraft support, radar and air defense. Officially, the Americans are present solely to provide training or advice, but it

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is common knowledge that U.S. "advisers" often assume operational jobs. Indeed, the General Accounting Office reported in 1974 that American personnel were providing assistance "in management, maintenance and use" of U.S.-supplied equipment on an "interim" basis until the Iranians acquire greater "self-sufficiency" in such operations. But since the Shah keeps ordering additional complex equipment, this "interim" period seems to stretch further and further into the future.

Iranian officials insist that the U.S. mercenary apparatus will gradually be dismantled as Iran's new technical schools start turning out skilled technicians and engineers, but that is less than convincing, since the Shah's appetite for modern arms exceeds the general rate of his country's technological progress. Moreover, the more complex a system is, the more time is required for maintenance and the more intricate such work becomes. Therefore, the need for external assistance tends to expand geometrically. As the Shah pursues his plan to convert Iran's military establishment into a modern, technology-intensive war machine like those of the major powers, the roles performed by American technicians will become increasingly vital to the combat effectiveness of the Iranian armed forces. There have been recent reports of a U.S. program to establish a multibillion-dollar electronic spy network and an early-warning system in Iran. The spy network, known as IBEX, will be built by Rockwell International and manned by former employees of the super-secret National Security Agency (NSA); the early-warning system, code-named "Seek Sentry," will incorporate long-range radar and communications links into a semi-automated national air-defense system. Both of these computer-based networks will be designed, built, administered and operated by Americans, with Iranians playing marginal roles, at best.

Diplomatic protocol requires that American officials stress the temporary nature of the U.S. presence, but privately most of them acknowledge that the American mercenaries will remain for a long time to come. In fact, it is becoming evident that U.S. arms policy is designed to assure a permanent American military presence in Iran. And the emphasis on a technology-based support structure guarantees that U.S. technicians will be manning the critical command posts that will be built up around U.S.-supplied radar, communications, logistics and command-and-control systems. In this manner, Washington gains more and more control over the employment of Iran's military forces. By threatening to remove all U.S. personnel, Washington can deter Teheran from launching an unauthorized attack or can halt an unwelcome coup attempt.

These findings suggest that the United States has largely succeeded in attaining its goals of converting Iran into a regional police power, while at the same time acquiring significant controls over Teheran's exercise of its newly acquired military might. Nevertheless, there are some fundamental weaknesses in Washington's game plan. To begin, there is no real guarantee that Washington can halt an unwanted war. The Shah leaves no doubt that he is the ultimate arbiter of his country's strategic interests, and one can assume that he would ignore all U.S. countermoves if he felt Iran's security were at stake. Indeed, by encouraging Teheran to play a superpower role in the Gulf, and providing it with the military wherewithal to do so, Washington seems to be increasing, rather than reducing, the likelihood of intra-Gulf conflict.

Moreover, the data suggest that *the danger of direct U.S. involvement in any such conflict is increasing.* As Teheran proceeds with its plans to create a modern, technology-based military establishment, the U.S. technical support apparatus will expand both in size and importance. And, even if the American mercenaries are not classified as combatants, the close association between Washington and Teheran is likely to prompt any belligerent to view U.S. personnel and installations as legitimate targets. Furthermore, since the Americans tend to be clustered at the critical nerve centers of the Shah's war machine—many of which are located at military airfields—it is likely that any enemy air strikes will cause substantial American casualties and thus create strong domestic pressure for retaliation. Finally, as Washington's political and economic stake in Iran's immense war machine increases, so will the temptation to intervene should these assets be threatened by a foreign power. Thus Washington's master plan for the Persian Gulf could become almost overnight another disastrous entanglement. □

SUPERMARKET WAXWORKS

The Agribusiness Market Gardens

ALICE SHABECOFF

Washington

In the produce bins of neighborhood supermarkets glisten mounds of waxy cucumbers, green tomatoes, plastic bags of radishes, ultra-orange oranges, perfectly formed apples and pears. These are the fruits and vegetables of the nation's food system. The United States Department of Agriculture, its Secretary Earl Butz, and its agribusiness clients extol America's food system as the world's finest, most efficient, most productive.

It must be conceded that the supermarket produce section is neat and tidy. And, as Earl Butz would "point with pride," strawberries are available in winter. But one bite into a mealy pear or fibrous cucumber will tell you that the trade-offs have been freshness, taste and ripeness.

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Did anyone ever ask *you* if you want strawberries in winter if, as the trade-off, there was to be no season when they tasted like strawberries? The food business has bred for symmetry, sprayed away blemishes, wrapped up shelf life and assured itself high profits. Consumers and small farmers are left holding the plastic bag.

America's vast and complex, industrialized and dehumanized food system is one of enormous distances, cadres of chemists and middlemen, and a span of about two weeks from harvest to supermarket shelf. Of the fresh vegetables grown in this country, 51 per cent are controlled by corporate firms. Tenneco, the oil giant, is one of the leaders. The citrus crop is 85 per cent under this kind of domination, with Coca-Cola the biggest name in the game. Dow Chemical grows a good deal of the lettuce.

The family farm used to raise a varied crop, bushels of apples, beans, corn, tomatoes, along with its eggs, milk and chickens. Cow and chicken manure became fertilizer for the produce crops. Now most fruits and vegetables are grown in California, Florida, Texas and Arizona, under an unvaried mono-culture. Year after year, the same vast fields produce the same crop, often three times a year. That kind of farming takes chemicals, tons of chemicals.

Instead of weeding by hand or plowing under with machines, growers now save labor by clearing their fields with weed-killers. According to the USDA, 115 million pounds of these herbicides were used in 1966; that amount had doubled by 1973. (The Air Force is at present trying to peddle 2.3 million gallons of a noxious defoliant named Herbicide Orange to America's farmers, now that it is no longer needed in Vietnam.)

Here is how a farmer in Del Ray, Fla., described his tomato-growing routine in a producer and growers' trade journal: he mixes a herbicide into the soil, then fumigates the soil (against soil-bearing diseases that build up in mono-culture) with chloropicrin and DD (a mixture of dichloropropenes, dichloropropanes and chlorinated hydrocarbons). For each acre, he applies 5 tons of fertilizer composed of phosphate, nitrate of potash and calcium nitrate. He covers the field with black plastic to stifle weed growth. Seven sprayers are used to apply pesticides, every five days; there is a separate sprayer for herbicides.

Although the USDA maintains that plants thrive as well on chemical as on organic fertilizers, some outside experts disagree. Horticulturist Lee Fryer, in his book *Earth Foods*, says these chemicals are unbalanced because they lack trace minerals, such as copper, iron and zinc. Fryer adds that tissue analysis of plants grown in such soil has disclosed decreased nutrient content.

Many of the pesticides long used on our crops—DDT, aldrin, dieldrin, chlordane—became known to the public during the exhaustive, well-publicized battles over their use which raged between industry and environmentalists. Finally, after many years, these chemicals have been banned or sharply limited by government fiat. The current pesticide favorite is Sevin, brilliantly effective on a wide range of pests; for example, on the tomato cutworm which bites off young tomato plants at ground level. It happens, however, that Sevin is "death on bees," as a pesticide expert at the Environmental Defense Fund explained. Since bees are responsible for cross-pollination that brings next year's crop, it is surprising that Sevin's use continues.

Yet even if the nation's produce were grown organically, or with ecologically sound chemicals, tasty, fresh, nutritious and ripe fruits and vegetables would still not find their way to the supermarket bins. The food delivery system is too unwieldy, characterized by vast distances, collusive marketing and an emphasis on anything that will enhance shelf life.

"It is impractical to harvest tomatoes commercially at the red-ripe stage or anything near that stage," reads a booklet prepared by the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association. "Such fruit is too tender even to stand the tumbling, rolling and frequent short drops inevitable in commercial harvesting, let alone packing and shipping. . . . So-called 'vine-ripe' tomatoes are not fully vine-ripe but are harvested at the pink stage." In fact, the vine-pink tomatoes are intended for relatively nearby markets; the grower picks tomatoes that are hard—"mature green"—for a distant market.

Since pickers can't always tell mature green from immature green (which never ripens, but sits on the window sill and rots), the USDA is now developing a machine, the photometer, which will judge the maturity of a green tomato from light transmittance. It was the USDA's genetics experiments that created the present high-yield, high-profit, low-flavor, mush-textured tomato, hard enough to withstand mechanical picking.

The wholesaling of much of America's produce is restricted by a mechanism called the marketing order, whose complexity rivals the theory of relativity. An invention of the depression, when surpluses caused disastrously low farm prices, marketing orders dictate minimum quality requirements (such as size and weight) and sometimes quantity as well (by allotting the amounts that can be marketed any week, for example). This mechanism is supposed to reduce both gluts and shortages.

Marketing orders are initiated, designed and voted through by the growers, and issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, with almost no voice from the consumer. "We feel, as a result of our research, that marketing orders have a potential for increasing prices to consumers," says Bob Hudek, research coordinator for the National Consumers Congress. "Therefore, at the very least, consumers should have some input into the operation of the marketing order boards," which administer the orders.

Back in 1972, there was a brouhaha about tomatoes that seems to support Hudek's contention. That year, because of bad weather, Florida had produced a smaller-than-usual tomato and the size requirements of the marketing order were therefore reduced. But that opened the door to small Mexican tomatoes, which can be bought at half the Florida price and which are, to boot, vine-ripened and tasty. Florida growers, stung by the competition, threatened to bring suit against the Secretary of Agriculture. Mexico now voluntarily restricts its exports.

Another example: in 1974, the Cost of Living Council found that the Navel Orange Marketing Order was restricting supplies by placing a limit on the number of California navel oranges that could be shipped to fresh markets each week. The council asked the Secretary of Agriculture to raise the weekly limits. "The effect has been the shipment of about 20 per cent more navel oranges . . . to reduce the average wholesale price from $3.86 to $3.31 per carton," the council reported. Thus, in many cases, the Department of Agriculture orchestrates monopoly pricing.

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Once marketed, the tomato, like most produce, proceeds to the packing house where, since it did not get a chance to ripen in the sun, it is usually sprayed with ethylene gas, to stimulate the ripening process. (The Chinese used to ripen pears by exposing them to the smoke of incense in closed rooms.) Whether artificially ripened produce contains fewer vitamins, as evidence collected by consumer groups suggests, is a question left unanswered by USDA.

The produce is washed with water, dried with hot air, graded, sorted, refrigerated, and then may wait at the packing house a number of days. "There's no big rush getting those things on the road," said Jesse Rayborn, of the Produce Marketing Association, as though he were talking about nuts and bolts.

Refrigeration, at a particular temperature for each type of produce, is a safe and much-used way to slow down the respiration process and extend shelf life. Dozens of other, less healthful methods have been tried or are in the offing. In the packing house, after its washing, the produce may receive a coating of wax, most noticeable on cucumbers, but often used as well on citrus fruit, apples, green peppers, tomatoes, cantaloupes and sweet potatoes.

Produce is sometimes stored in a modified atmosphere—a gas mixture that may be much lower in oxygen and higher in carbon dioxide than air. A chemical called maleic hydrazide is widely used to inhibit sprouting of potatoes and onions. In response to a request from former Rep. Julia Butler Hansen (of Washington), the General Accounting Office ordered an inter-agency study of the chemical. GAO found that it "may pose a health risk to consumers" and "that the Food and Drug Administration records contain no evidence that foods were ever tested for maleic hydrazide residues even though this pesticide has been used for over twenty years." It is just one example out of many.

USDA research labs are now working with a series of compounds, one of them called rhizobitoxine, that they hope can be used to slow down the ripening and aging of fruit. "Though much is unknown about how these compounds work, in some way they interfere with the basic biochemical mechanisms," reports a recent USDA *Agriculture Research* magazine. It would be comforting to know just how they do it.

In course of time, the produce must get from the packing house on one side of the continent to the consumer on the other. This involves another set of middlemen. Packing houses hire salesmen who, in turn, work through wholesalers. The larger supermarket chains, as well as wholesale markets in terminal cities, have brokers right out in the fields. "We buy wherever it's growing. We tell the broker we want two cars of carrots that day. He'll buy from any fields that look good," says the produce manager of a medium-sized food chain. But they buy in huge quantities, and therefore very seldom from local farmers. He mentioned also that local farmers don't size properly and seldom have produce-washing facilities on the farm.

The transportation of produce is almost medieval in its inefficiency. The supermarket chain specifies the use of truck or rail, and pays the freight costs. About 70 per cent goes by refrigerated truck, usually driven by independent truckers. From harvest to packing house to supermarket warehouse, by truck, takes seven to ten days. Archaic rail service took two weeks, until recently. The National Commission on Productivity has just instituted a Fresh-from-the-Farm run, a daily service that coordinates four separate railroad lines and moves produce from California to Boston in seven days. Once in the store, it is usually sold in a day or two. A pound of tomatoes that sells for 49.5 cents to the consumer was valued at 13.6 cents in the field.

Of course, the tomatoes in the bin are neatly packaged. Industry likes prepackaging because by reducing bulk (e.g., cutting the tops off radishes), it reduces freight costs. It also reduces in-store labor, slows moisture loss, keeps goods cleaner, protects items from handling and falling on the floor. That prepackaging is an inconvenience for customers who want one tomato instead of a package of three (they can now demand that a package be opened), that it conceals possible blemishes and robs produce of its natural appeal, are factors considered of minor importance to supermarket managers.

The elaborate and not very appetizing or healthful processes that breed, fertilize, spray and extend the shelf life of produce for mass industrial profit are a consequence of the American way of life. The food system is this way because we live in big cities, surrounded by suburban sprawl instead of farmsteads, because our real estate prices and taxes have driven farmers out of business, because the corporate structure as it has evolved—with its tax breaks, its friends in government, its interlocking directorates with banks—eats up the small farmer, replacing agriculture with agribusiness.

The USDA is part of the problem. Its top executives play musical chairs to and from the top executive positions in agribusiness firms. When Clifford Hardin stepped down as Secretary of Agriculture, he took a job with Ralston Purina; and Ralston Purina's consultant, Earl Butz, switched over to become Secretary of Agriculture. Clarence Palmby, when he was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, was one of the officials responsible for the 1972 grain deal with the Soviet Union. He then moved to Continental Grain, one of the companies which made a fine profit on the deal. The list of such shifts could go on at length.

For decades the thrust of USDA research and policy programs has been to aid agribusiness, while thousands of family farms which could raise healthier, fresher produce folded every year. Furthermore, all the agricultural committees in Congress have been almost exclusively filled with agribusiness voices.

We are also part of the problem. Because somehow we buy strawberries in winter even though they taste like mashed paper, and thus reward and perpetuate the system. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Harriette Arnow's Chronicles of Destruction

BARBARA L. BAER

When, at the age of 26, Harriette Simpson Arnow began to write her first novel, there were still no roads into much of Kentucky's backwoods and mountains. The great migration of Southern Mountain people from hill to city had not yet started. But the young writer sensed that life as she had known it along the Cumberland in southeastern Kentucky was doomed. To keep a record of a culture and a people in the process of destruction, Harriette Arnow began writing her Kentucky trilogy; that writing spanned the next two decades.

"At an early age I saw my work as a record of people's lives in terms of roads," Mrs. Arnow told me. "At first, it was only a path, then a community at the end of a gravel road that took men and families away, and finally, where gravel led to a highway, the highway destroyed the hill community.

"I was aware that nothing had been written on the Southern migrants, of what was actually happening to them and to their culture, of how they came to the cities the first time in the 1920s, leaving their families behind. I began writing during the depression, which had sent hill people back home again. And then, as I was still writing during the Second War, I witnessed the permanent move the men made by bringing their wives and children with them to the cities. With that last migration, hill life was gone forever, and with it, I suppose, a personal dream of community I'd had since childhood and have been trying ever since to recapture in my writing." As Mrs. Arnow talked, she stoked the burning logs in the fireplace of her small farmhouse outside Ann Arbor. The morning had begun with a blustery rain and winds so the fire brightened the sunless day.

Harriette Simpson Arnow's Kentucky trilogy began with *Mountain Path* (1936), continued with *Hunter's Horn* (1949) and was completed with her finest novel, *The Dollmaker* (1954). Whether the books are read today as regional, or realistic or even feminist writing, they are first of all a coherent vision, in the best tradition of American fiction, of Americans coming of age on the edge of the shrinking frontier; they tell the stories of men and women who see their dreams of self-sufficiency shrink and their personal freedoms foreclosed by a rapacious industrial society.

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Mountain Path is the only novel of Harriette Arnow in which we can identify the author with her central character. Like her heroine, Louisa Sheridan, Mrs. Arnow was forced to leave the university and earn her living by teaching in a rural school. "I taught for two years in the July-through-February Pulaski County schools when I was 18," Mrs. Arnow said. "It was good for me. I had been so preoccupied with myself and knew so little of life. Those children, who were bright and eager to learn, taught me more than I taught them. They knew the names for everything, for parts of trees and plants I had never heard of. If, later, they were considered 'ignorant hillbillies' in the city schools, it wasn't because they lacked intelligence but through a misunderstanding of language. They didn't know the names for things they had never seen before, and many words were different."

Louisa, the young teacher, a precocious intellectual in her circle at the university, arrives in Canebrake, a spot no one has been able to locate for her on any map. She is thrown immediately into the life of the Cal family, subsistence farmers who moonshine for cash and who live according to a strict, nearly martial code that stems from a feud with a family "at the other end of the valley." The children Louisa teaches, the man she falls in love with, the women she watches at work, all cause the young woman to question her education, values, assumptions and herself: "For the first time in her life, perhaps, she saw herself with absolute candor and the sight wasn't an inspiring one."

Rarely in American fiction has the leading character of a *Bildungsroman*—a coming-of-age novel—been a woman who, like Huck Finn, makes her way through physical as well as emotional trials and emerges whole as an adult. Basically it is through identifying herself with Chris, the man she loves, an outsider who has killed one of the Cal family's "enemies," that Louisa perceives what she had missed while studying life through books. Like Huck Finn's identification with Jim, Louisa begins to see through the eyes of a fugitive.

> He [Chris] ought to be insensitive and stupid and unthinking. It would be easier that way. He had taken another man's life; and because of what he had done he should have lost all love for his own life. Instead, it seemed to her that he lived with a consciousness of being alive and a love of life about him more than most men.

However, Louisa cannot easily resolve the contradictions between two worlds, two female lives: there is the life cycle of the hill woman, taken up with giving birth and burying the dead, that allows no time for questions, but nevertheless permits her to feel "secure and safe and filled with husband and child"; and there is her own civilized, intellectual life, filled with nothing but questions, "empty, trying to live so as to feel nothing, watching, thinking, 'This is not my life. I am preparing for my real life. Some day I shall live and be a success.' "

Louisa is about to say, yes, to marry Chris and stay in the valley—"she was running now—building years of a lifetime with each step"—when her dilemma is resolved: Chris, critically wounded in a gunfight with the rival family, must be left alone in the icy cave beside the whiskey still. Were a doctor called, the whole Cal family would be arrested for moonshining and for harboring a criminal. Louisa learns that there are times when one must choose between two tragic outcomes, and when Chris dies, she packs up to leave. She can't even cry. "She would forget them all—dog's eyes, trumpet vine—poplar leaves—and woe, woe, over the hearthstones."

While *Mountain Path* clearly stands on its own as fiction, it is also a woman's book, particularly a young woman's book, and should be reissued for a new generation of readers. The cloth edition has long been out of print and the paperback reprint (Council of the Southern Mountains, 1963) is almost unobtainable. I came upon my copy of *Mountain Path* in an Ann Arbor motel run by friends of Mrs. Arnow, whose books stand on their shelves for guests to see.

Thirteen years passed between the publication of *Mountain Path* and that of a second novel, *Hunter's Horn* (1949). In

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1939, Harriette Simpson had married Harold Arnow, a newspaperman, and with him moved back to southeastern Kentucky along the Little Indian Creek on the Big South Fork of the Cumberland. For five years, in pursuit of a dream of the simple life, the couple tried to live off the land by farming. A daughter, Marvella, was born in 1941. Though the Arnows had left the city in order to write, writing was impossible.

"There just wasn't time for it. It was my husband who dreamt of that simple life," Mrs. Arnow said in a voice whose ironic tone was unmistakable. "I'd never wanted to leave the city. Simply cooking off a coal stove and cleaning up after it took half of my time. We never mastered the skills necessary for subsistence farming. After the baby was born, and we became afraid of being too far from a doctor, we moved back to Detroit. I started writing *Hunter's Horn*." Another child, a son, was born in 1946. The novel came out three years later.

Since that time, Mrs. Arnow has returned to Kentucky on visits. The process of destruction begun during the war has kept accelerating. "Where twenty-two families used to lived scattered near us over the hills, not a single homestead remains. Only tumbledown houses stand where there once was a community. The wild Cumberland has been flooded and turned into Lake Cumberland. The big companies killed all the wild rivers to serve tourists and provide electric power. They made a dam and then they tore up the hills with strip and auger mining. Flooding and erosion are everywhere and now the dam is leaking. Strip mining is still allowed under the broad-form deeds that date from the Civil War. For a small sum local people leased their mineral and timber rights to the big companies in perpetuity. After that, they had nothing to say about the use of their land or rivers. Little people are never consulted when it's a question of big companies and big profits."

In a very particular way, the naturalistic outlook is ever present in Harriette Arnow's fiction. Man, even a good man, is always on the verge of violating nature and suffering nature's repayment in misfortunes. Nature tempts man to use it badly, to kill one of its messengers, and when the violent and acquisitive instinct has prevailed, the transgression must be paid for. The dynamic of temptation and retribution must go back deeply in Mrs. Arnow's memory, back to seeing animals killed, to witnessing her countryside despoiled and stripped; this dynamic almost allows her best writing to plot itself.

Hunter's Horn, written after the author returned from Kentucky to Detroit, tells how nature repays man for violating it. Before the novel begins, man has exploited the land along the Cumberland. Rich bottom soil has run off into gullies, gullies are overgrown with rough brush. Nunn and Milly Ballew, the last of an old family, return to their grandparents' neglected homestead where they set out to farm the abused soil.

Nunn Ballew is a hard worker and a good man, but he neglects his land and his family to pursue a red fox called King Devil who stalks the neighborhood, killing farm animals and luring hounds to their deaths. Everyone else in the area has given up chasing the devilish animal, but Nunn is obsessed with the fox. He lives only for the chase. "Nunn had the same compulsion for catching King Devil as other men have for making a million dollars, or I had for writing," Harriette Arnow explained. "Nunn knows he's bedeviled."

> "I've heard say that a lot of men sells their souls to the devil an if I foller a red fox to hell it won't be so different. An sometimes," he went on, speaking with a seriousness he had not meant to uncover, "I wonder would God have my soul."

Harriette Simpson Arnow

During a night of storm and childbirth, as the river runs at flood level along the bluffs, King Devil is finally killed by the Ballew hounds. The fox turns out to be a vixen, pregnant with a litter, and Milly Ballew, who has just helped in a difficult delivery, is filled with a premonition of their own misfortune, for "the vixen had run so free: not many things could be so free."

> Nunn looked up at her, and with the lantern on the floor and the strange shadows falling upward, his face seemed all gray-shadowed eyes as he said in a low, absent-minded voice, "He allus seemed big somehow—bigger lots of times than anything else in the world."

No sooner is the fox killed than the eldest daughter, Suse, who also wanted to be free—"she wouldn't be like Milly and she wouldn't be like Lureenie; she'd make her own life; it wouldn't make her"—reveals that she is pregnant. Like Persephone, the girl is caught and doomed by nature to a life of penance. Nunn insists that Suse salvage his reputation by marrying her seducer and entering into nearly feudal servitude to another family. Part of Nunn has died with his victory over nature's tormentor, the fox.

Harriette Arnow was not a one-book writer, and yet the only novel that has survived and been reprinted a number of times in paperback, and taught in college courses, is *The Dollmaker*. A runner-up for the 1955 National Book Award (won by Faulkner with *The Fable*), *The Dollmaker* is Mrs. Arnow's finest work and deserves its growing reputation.

The dollmaker of the title, Gertie Nevels, first appears only as a large sexless figure in silhouette, coming out of the heavy fog astride a mule. When we see her in the lights of a car, we are immediately aware of her size. Gertie Nevels, with a sick baby under her arm, is larger than life, a rawboned figure hewn from some matriarchal past. Her first act in the novel is to perform an unassisted, roadside tracheotomy on her choking baby. She fells a tree to find a branch in which she hollows out a tube to insert in the hole she has cut in her baby's throat.

Gertie also has the vision, and the talent, of a primitive artist. Although she whittles dolls to support her family during a strike in Detroit, she is constantly carving a figure of Christ, whose face, emerging and receding from a great block of cherry wood, is the central image of the novel.

While Harriette Arnow was working on *The Dollmaker*, her Macmillan editor came to Detroit to meet his author. "He expected to be met by Gertie Nevels herself," Mrs. Arnow remembers with a chuckle. "He just stood at the screen door gaping, not able to grasp that I wasn't the big woman I had been writing about." Mrs. Arnow is, in fact, small-boned with delicate features, very large light gray-blue eyes and fine wispy gray hair. Her quickly moving hands seem to be perpetually seeking something to light on—a cigarette, wood for the fire, a book or a map to show an inquisitive guest—and her voice, light and with a full Kentucky accent, is

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charged with salty wit. No one could be further from the straight-speaking, lumbering Gertie, who differs from her creator in another fundamental respect: although Mrs. Arnow has written for most of her life about Kentucky, she could never stand to go home again. Gertie, by contrast, is indifferent to any part of the country, and the world, but her home.

Gertie is almost as unawakened and vulnerable, despite her size, as those Kentucky hills and valleys. Everything is taken from her by the outside world. Her dream of self-reliance, and the small farm she has managed to buy, are lost when her husband finds a factory job in the accelerated wartime economy of Detroit and social pressure decrees that she must follow her husband. The Nevels, without knowing it, join thousands of others with one-way tickets to make that historical phenomenon, the great migration.

Gertie's strength is sapped by the city. Two of her children turn away from their mother because her country ways embarrass them; two others never quite forgive her for taking them to the city. And Gertie's husband, Clovis, doesn't need his wife to help earn the family wages until there is a strike.

> Slowly her hand dropped from the doorknob, and she turned back to Clovis. It wasn't the way it had used to be back home when she had done her share, maybe more than her share of feeding and fending for the family. Then, with the egg money, chicken money, a calf sold here, a pig sold there, she'd bought almost every bit of food they didn't raise. Here everything, even to the kindling wood, came from Clovis.

Then tragedy, hanging over the sooty red air of Detroit from the novel's beginning, strikes the family. The youngest daughter, Cassie Marie, a fey child whose only friend in the city has been her imaginary companion, slips through a hole in a railway fence and is caught between onrushing trains. Her legs are severed from her body, as the family is severed from its roots and its members from one another. Gertie nearly loses her sanity in the weeks that follow the child's death.

> She sprang up, looking wildly about her as she lived again the losing battles —all the battles: to have the land, to make Reuben happy, to reach Cassie, and the last big battle—to hold the blood. . . .

The Dollmaker ends in 1945 with the war's end, when the last stage of the Southern migration was nearly complete. Most hill families were so in debt from installment buying that they could not afford to return home, even if they still had a home and land to return to, and even if their children had not become addicted to the city and its distractions. Gertie knows that she will never return to her hills. The block of wood in which she has been trying to bring forth the individual meaning, the specific face, of man's suffering and sacrifice and death, is wheeled to the woodcutter. In the beautiful last dialogue, as the woodcutter gives Gertie his ax, we learn what Gertie has learned: no individual face can encompass the complexity of human suffering, whether a man's or a woman's, a relative's or a stranger's, a friend's or an enemy's.

> He touched the wood where the face would have been, and nodded. "Christ yu meant it tu be—butcha couldn't find no face fu him."
>
> She shook her head below the lifted ax. "No, they was so many would ha done; they's millions an millions a faces plenty fine enough—fer him."
>
> She pondered, then slowly lifted her glance from the block of wood and wonder mixed in with the pain. "Why, some a my neighbors down there in the alley—they would ha done."

During the long hiatus between *The Dollmaker* and her next novel, Harriette Arnow published two personal and social histories of her home country, the Cumberland basin, *Seedtime on the Cumberland* (1960) and *Flowering on the Cumberland* (1963).

Then came *The Weedkiller's Daughter* (Knopf, 1970), a radical departure in subject matter and locale from the Kentucky trilogy. The novel is set in suburban Detroit in the mid-1960s. Its characters are affluent Americans, two generations of a politically and emotionally alienated family named Schnitzler. The family is split down the middle over race, the Vietnamese War, communism and how to "treat" nature. Mrs. Arnow was trying to extend her persistent vision of man's destruction of place from the Kentucky hills to the poisoned urban society where the obsession with clearing away nature—symbolized by the weed-killing father of the title—has left man bereft of his reason.

BY THE LIGHTS OF THE BRIDGE

(1968)

the more in love
the more lost
and you, chained in your boarding
house, weather
made as if to punish,
you stand near Procne, Dido,
this be only you
of the fair, grey Countree
and on the third floor
so you tell me
the bed is made and "love
has become somewhat distasteful. It is
associated with birds of ill omen,
with witchcraft, wounds,
and bitter hearts."

Our names are there,
curious honor roll
of the despised, despised for their acts,
your big toe in the bathtub
or me kissing your hand,
Cupid when devouring all does Melancholy
leave, in this wake.

There is the decision to sink,
to stay, to be surrounded by the city,
to let its greyness be,
to be "a star captive in a tomb"
or "an interior flickering" in the
terrible forest, the world's night
or horrid black cathedrals that did let birds in.
"Tell Rosalind, her Colin bids her adieu."

David Ray

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Mrs. Arnow herself gave me two reasons for shifting her focus from her own culture and locale to new material. First, she had never wanted to be a writer with a label, whether regional, realist, transcendentalist, Marxist (she's been called all those things) or, as is happening now, feminist. Second, she believed she had something to write about Middle America.

About being labeled, Harriette Arnow said she never thought of herself as any particular kind of writer. She was surprised to learn that *The Dollmaker* was being taught as "source material" in a sociology class on Appalachian migrants. "I wrote it as a novel," she replied. And she reacted strongly when one teacher asked, should she teach *The Dollmaker* even though it was Marxist? "I don't like the term Marxist, any more than I like 'proletariat.' Neither term allows for the person's individual qualities to come through. When I write about poor people I don't want tags put on them, or on me. In the North people are always tagged by what they do, how much money they make, rather than what they are themselves. In the South, we were more known for ourselves, from what place and background we came from."

The second reason for writing *The Weedkiller's Daughter* was to depict the contrast the author felt existed between Americans of the pioneer period—she had finished researching her Cumberland histories in 1959—and Americans of the 1950s and 1960s. "As our ancestors crossed the Frontier, they lived constantly with physical fear, and after taking all possible precautions, continued on in the face of real dangers. The United States Government had faith in democracy; in the early years we worried little about other ideologies." Mrs. Arnow felt the country had changed after World War II. "I used to hear people in government calling us a democracy. Now all we hear is 'a nation of free enterprise' or a 'capitalist country.' In the 1950s, our government appeared to feel that given an opportunity most of their fellow Americans would become Communists. Everybody was afraid of something: of blacks, Latin Americans hillbillies, other objectionable characters." Mrs. Arnow told me she had met dozens of parents at PTA meetings who, like the Schnitzlers in her novel, were "afraid of a variety of things from the atom bomb to mingling with the wrong people . . . and like other people they hated the things they feared."

Harriette Arnow herself was aware that *The Weedkiller's Daughter* had not been a success even with her "own" readers. Where the book fails to convince is not in its vision of uprooted people further destroying everything that has roots around them but in the characters of the children and parents, cut out of pasteboard models of good and evil. In the Kentucky novels, Mrs. Arnow succeeded so well in placing her characters in their setting, and giving them individuality, that one forgot one was reading about strange and unfamiliar people. The realism of the Kentucky trilogy resides not only in its exceptionally well done details of speech and daily life but in the central truths about the characters' souls. The intimacy and the perspective of the earlier books are lacking in this more recent novel. Which is not to say that the writer should stick to her Kentucky material. Mrs. Arnow's latest novel, *The Kentucky Trace*, (Knopf, 1974) is a return to the Cumberland during the Revolutionary War. But neither it nor *The Weedkiller's Daughter* takes the vision of the Kentucky trilogy any further. That vision, at once historical and creative, may not be transplantable. One kind of rural past is gone. Destruction of another kind continues within the city. I would like to see Harriette Arnow tell us what she knows about rootlessness, whether that of the "hillbillies" or her own, in the present time.

Harriette Arnow is about to start a new novel, already in her mind and tugging at her to write it. She didn't talk about its subject or place, only that she can't really begin writing until she finishes a history of her hometown, Burnside, Ky., for their Bicentennial committee. "And I can't get caught up writing a novel until I've everything else finished. It's something you can't stop once started, like eating peanuts," Mrs. Arnow said, as we left the fire, the lunch table and the large Arnow dog who had several times climbed into my lap just as I was writing down what his mistress was saying. (Mrs. Arnow was kind enough to fill in our interview with a long letter, from which I have quoted.) Outside the sky had cleared and it felt as though autumn had arrived at last. The fallen leaves blown over the lawn were mixed with the last moist orange petals in Harriette Arnow's summer garden. □

The Long Voyage Home

UP FROM COMMUNISM. *By John P. Diggins. Harper & Row. 456 pp. $20.*

GEORGE G. ECKSTEIN

The case of the politician who moves with advancing age across the political spectrum from Left to Right is not an infrequent phenomenon. In sharply divided countries such as France the swings are wide and abrupt—Laval and Doriot are only two of many examples that come to mind. In less polarized societies like our own, changes of that kind on the part of politicians are usually less extreme. Here the wider swings are better observable among the intellectuals, and in *Up from Communism* John P. Diggins, professor of history at the University of California at Irvine, has traced the "conservative odysseys in American intellectual history" of four influential old Left radicals: Max Eastman, John Dos Passos, Will Herberg and James Burnham. Diggins, now 40 and thus a member of a later generation, got the idea for this study at least in part when, facing his radical students in the late 1960s, he pondered on *their* likely future path. He selected the four somewhat dissimilar figures "because they underwent the complete shift from the old Left of the 1930s to the new Right of the 1950s . . . [and] were among the few notable ex-radicals who found their way to the editorial board of William F. Buckley's *National Review*."

Diggins spends little time on the "why" of the transformation; only in the case of Dos Passos does he briefly resort to psycho-history, for which, in any case, he appears to have little use. Nor does he delve to any extent into the connection between a growing conservatism and the usual effects of maturing and aging, that part-biological, part-experiential phenomenon which is so very nearly universal that an ideological journey in the opposite direction, from Right to Left, is virtually unheard of. Instead he re-creates, through and around the four protagonists, a fascinating and on the whole accurate picture of American intellectual history during the last half-century. A lively and subtle picture, drawn with unusual imagination by someone who, after all, has no first-hand experience of those decades of intense argument over the political and philosophical problems posed by the Bolshevik revolution, the

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Great Depression and fascism—and on another plane, Freud and Einstein, the new psychology and the new physics.

Diggins's primary interest is in the "how," and he follows the different routes which brought his four subjects from similar starting points to the terminus of the *National Review*. In stage one he treats their radical phase; in stage two the transition from the break with Leninism to the cold war; part three examines their uneasy alliance with William Buckley and, beyond it, "the dilemma of American conservatism." The story might well be called "four variations on a theme."

Max Eastman, the Dionysian celebrant of life who went from the spirited Greenwich Village Left of the 1910s to Marxism, became one of the earliest supporters of the Bolshevik revolution, later Trotsky's foremost defender and translator. In the 1940s he began to question Leninism politically, and Marxism philosophically and economically, all the while holding on to a lyrical affirmation of life and a profound atheism—indeed, eventually breaking with Buckley because of it. To Diggins, "all this suggests that Eastman was at his best as a skeptic, one who could be counted upon in his early radical years to turn easy answers into harder questions. As a conservative he was an eclectic dilettante. . . . He wanted to bring capitalism into the 20th century, but he chose Hayek instead of Joseph Schumpeter or Max Weber, thereby returning to the 'free market' fetish of the 19th century."

John Dos Passos, grandson of a Portuguese immigrant, son of a prominent lawyer, product of Choate and Harvard, was radicalized by World War I and the Sacco-Vanzetti case, and later became a writer acclaimed and courted by his Communist colleagues. Yet the "sensibility of a poet at war with a powerful society" would never be comfortable with the party: "On two important issues . . . [he] found himself at odds with the communist orthodoxy: the function of the literary artist, and the interpretation of American history and society."

The individualist, anarchist strand in him, as well as his deep sense of America's special history, informed his entire *oeuvre*, a unique chronicle of the United States from the start of the century through the 1950s. Drawing more on Veblen than on Marx, always championing the individual against the large organization, the creator against the manipulator, he moved from the harsh confrontations of *USA* ("all right, we are two nations") to a skewed view of the New Deal and wartime bureaucracy (*Grand Design*), and then to a bitter indictment of corrupt unionism, corporate power and a civilization of false values (*Midcentury*). In a Jeffersonian past he looked for the values he saw abandoned by a liberal society and threatened by a Communist one.

Will Herberg, who received much of his early schooling from his immigrant parents, educated Russian Jews in the New York ghetto, followed a more philosophical and religious path, what Diggins calls his "quest for transcendence." It was this bent that first brought Herberg into the Communist movement. Not long afterward, he followed Jay Lovestone into the "Right opposition," and became one of its leading theoreticians. The experience of the Moscow trials and the Stalin-Hitler pact forced Herberg to recognize that "the very form that was indispensable for . . . the victory of the revolution, turned out to lead to Stalin and totalitarianism." This "foreboding sense of irony and tragedy" led Herberg to existentialism and ultimately to Judaic and Christian philosophy by way of Martin Buber. By 1955, despite some reservations about the shallowness of the religious revival during the Eisenhower period, he was ready to declare that "Soviet communism and the faith that underlies American democracy confront each other in a conflict that admits of no compromise because it is a conflict of [religious] ultimates." And in the 1960s he supported unjust law and order against those who, like Martin Luther King, opposed them with nonviolent action; and he was upset by Pope John's encyclicals and other liberalizing gestures in the churches.

James Burnham, who came of a wealthy Catholic family and was educated at Princeton and Oxford, was attracted relatively late to the Communist movement, in its Trotskyist variant. He became one of its leading spokesmen, and the man to whom Trotsky entrusted the task of refuting Max Eastman's eventual arguments for rejecting Marxism and Leninism. Burnham's own break with Trotsky, who persisted in seeing the Russia of Stalin as a workers' state, followed not long afterward in early 1940; his break with Marxism occurred a year later with the publication of *The Managerial Revolution*.

At a time when leftist writings only rarely received mass media attention, this book produced wide reverberations. Its central idea of the shift of control from ownership to management, of the rise of a new managerial class, had been around for some time, but Burnham's gift of apodictic formulation and sweeping conclusion seemed to express ideas that were in the air and that found apparent confirmation in the temporary cooperation of the two totalitarian powers. Burnham's even more sweeping predictions on the redistribution of world power turned out to be utterly wrong. However, this did not prevent him from making similarly daring predictions later on as the geopolitician of the *National Review*. The key to Burnham's attitude is his fatal obsession with power. It came to the surface again in his fascination with "the Machiavellians," in his *Partisan Review* article, "Lenin's Heir," with its ambivalent attitude toward Stalin, and in his aggressive cold-war writings. Yet, as Diggins points out, his interventionist attack against the proponents of containment creates a dilemma: "Burnham's idea of liberation embraced two incompatible world views: the geopolitics of power and national interests on the one hand, and the higher politics of morality and national commitment on the other. The result of this theoretical schizophrenia was a confusion between what was possible and what was 'honorable.' "

Was there a precise point at which each of the four radicals detached himself from the Left and began to collaborate with the conservative side? Hard to determine: none of them, with the partial exception of Herberg, had been involved with the Communist movement to the extent that he could imagine himself as having been failed by his God and be eager to put as much distance as possible between Him and himself. Other intellectual companions of the period stopped at various points along the Left-liberal continuum; even Ed-

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mund Wilson in his grouchy old age scolded his old friend Dos Passos for supporting Goldwater. One reason for the defections was undoubtedly an overriding anti-Stalinism which obliterated all other considerations. In some cases, perhaps, the new public available to these writers in conservative magazines and mass magazines, and some that were both (*Reader's Digest*, the Luce publications), exerted a certain influence. At any rate, the collaboration with Buckley was not wholly untroubled, and in the case of Eastman was terminated by explicit resignation. And Diggins stresses one common element of radical and conservative thinking as having facilitated the passage from the old Left to the new American Right: their common contempt for liberalism.

In the last part of his book Diggins dwells on the precariousness and the inner contradictions of the conservative intellectual position in a society dominated ideologically by a broad liberal consensus. It is fundamentally the same kind of dilemma which has long confronted the radical Left of various hues in this country, and led to its organizational ineffectiveness and political co-option, despite its often brilliant intellectual achievements. □

Humane, Moralistic, Conservative

THORNTON WILDER: An Intimate Portrait. *By Richard H. Goldstone. Saturday Review Press. 299 pp. $11.95.*

ROBERT MORRIS

The appearance of the first full-length study of the life and work of Thornton Wilder, almost simultaneously with his death, is one of those turns of literary history whose significance is hard to ignore. One might say that the passing of Wilder symbolizes the passing from American literature of a tradition that began with Emerson, continued brilliantly with Henry James, and found in the novelist of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and the playwright of *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* its most famous contemporary disciple. The tradition I refer to is the Puritan one—humanistic, moralistic, conservative—and its bearing on the creative and personal life of Wilder is woven almost motif-like into Richard Goldstone's frank and perceptive "intimate portrait": a timely book, long awaited.

The son of an authoritarian father and the grandson (on his mother's side) of a minister, Wilder seemed from the start fated to run smoothly in the tracks of the genteel tradition. He attended a very proper grammar school and an equally proper suburban high school. His father enrolled him in Oberlin, but Wilder transferred after two years to Yale, where he came under the influence of William Lyon Phelps. Graduated in 1920, Wilder had no desire to become an expatriate as so many writers of his generation did; he went to Rome instead of to Paris, and stayed there for a year until he was recalled by his father who had found a job for him at Lawrenceville. Wilder taught there for seven years, publishing his first novel, *The Cabala* (based on and inspired by his Italian experiences) in 1926, and *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* a year later. *The Bridge* made Wilder famous overnight, wealthy enough to resign from his position as French master and devote all his energies to writing.

And oddly enough this is exactly what Wilder didn't do. From the very start of his literary career, his strong Puritan reserve, his caution about the future, and a special concern for stability and security made him circumspect about becoming a full-time writer. Instead of launching a new novel at once, Wilder went on a series of lecture tours. His third novel, *The Woman of Andros*, did not appear until 1930, by which time he was a part-time professor of creative writing at the University of Chicago, a post tailor-made for him by his Oberlin-Yale school chum, Robert Maynard Hutchins. The novel provided the occasion for a vitriolic attack on Wilder by Mike Gold, who accused Wilder of toadying to the values of upper-class WASPs, and of being, in Gold's words, "the Emily Post of culture." Wilder stayed on in Chicago until 1936, when he resigned to work on an idea he had for a play. The play was *Our Town*, which two years later was directed on Broadway by Jed Harris and

Robert Morris's most recent book is a study of V.S. Naipaul, Paradoxes of Order (*University of Missouri Press*).

THE RESERVOIR

Where a fishline
pierces the surface
I see through sunglasses
shadowy shapes rising
from the bed of the lake
streaming lilies
shaking off silt.
I leave my dog
to the rapture of trees
and break the skin of the water
with my bare feet.

Raptures of the deep
or swallowed by a snake,
my weight no longer counts
but now, I too, push
against the dam.
Drifting in rhythm
with exquisite algae
and shimmering sand
I begin to search
guided by tickling fish.

At the foot of the dam
is a house
or rather
its remaining rectangular shape.
My toes trace walls
of a kitchen, three bedrooms,
a living room,
kick up corncobs, a doll, a crib rail,
ashes in the fireplace.
A book, words washed clean,
lies open
with slowly turning pages.

Around the house are stumps
like pirates' lost legs.
When I press my hands over the scars
counting the yearly ridges
do they, I wonder, feel the nerves
of their missing trunks?

A mud turtle stirs a whirlwind
over the gravelled driveway
moving faster now than the car
rusting in the garage
without a door, a roof, or walls.

In back of the house
a path wanders through weeds
over a small hill
marked by a floating buoy.
I twang its anchor chain
and overhead, in the alien air
there is a ring of warning.

I have found the deepest part,
waving with dead sedge and grass.
No cows graze
swishing away flies
no nettles grow.
But there are bones
and shadows.
There in the meadow
shadows that I know
are dancing
and many stones are lying
in regular rows.

Barbara Adams

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became, as it remains today, the national play of America.

Such facts about Wilder's life are recorded in most thumbnail biographies, and even an amplification of them would not make exceptional Wilder's rather conventional progress from respectability to fame. Richard Goldstone, however, gives us a good deal more because he discerns the figure in the carpet. Without dipping into amateur psychoanalysis, he is able to make facts cohere in showing how the pattern of Wilder's life was, from the first, fashioned not merely by his successes and failures but by his "personal inadequacies, perplexities and contradictions." Since Goldstone gathered much of this material over a period of thirty years, from direct conversations with Wilder and from correspondence with him, and since he maintains a witty remove throughout the book, there is no reason not to believe that the insights are based on analysis rather than biographical fancy.

And some of Goldstone's insights are most revealing. Wilder, for example (and his Puritanism seemed to have a good deal to do with it), shrank from fame almost as much as he courted it. Mike Gold's attack embittered him toward critics, but when he got a good press he would somehow manage to work himself into a depression because the scholars received his work poorly. James Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson's sniffing out the odor of plagiarism hanging about *The Skin of Our Teeth*—a charge that was academically sustainable but artistically nonsensical, since all artists plagiarize—kept Wilder silent for six years. And even when *The Ides of March* (1948) was chosen as a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection, Wilder was withered by the lack of recognition on the part of the critics and didn't write another novel until 1967. Of course, that was a best-seller, too.

But only because it was by Thornton Wilder. Goldstone is wise enough to recognize, and sympathetic enough to put it gently, that Wilder sold on his name alone, not because he had anything more to say to intellectual America:

> What he wrote after 1948 did not seem to come to grips with either the contemporary world or with present-day concerns. The America he had chosen to examine had a reality that existed only in the enclaves of memory, and in the memory of a smaller and smaller audience. The last quarter of his life found him chiefly represented by *The Matchmaker* (New York in the 1880s), *The Eighth Day* (the 1900s), *Theophilus North* (the 1920s). With most of his contemporaries dead, Wilder, in a sense, chose also not to survive except as an explorer of the past—but of a past that does not inform the future.

The fact is that Wilder seems to have recognized it as well, but being the person he was, could do little about it. He set himself impossibly high standards—understandably so, since he came of the tradition that made of work a God and of success a heaven. Yet he fragmented his life and divided his talents in such a way that it was luck more than diligence which worked for him in the end. Family and friends took up a great deal of his time, though as Goldstone informs us, Wilder was better at making friends than at sustaining relationships, and family responsibilities ultimately became burdens. Always robust, Wilder became in his later years corpulent and subject to nagging illnesses. In all of this it is not difficult to see how Wilder was the sort of person who might allow the man to win over the artist.

And yet one would like to see more. There is a certain dimension missing from Goldstone's book. The observer is omnipresent, objective and engaging; but Wilder, the observed, for all his rendered fullness, is somehow absent. Wilder wrote hundreds of letters and kept journal upon journal, yet for some reason only darkly hinted at in the Foreword, we have samples of neither. It almost seems as if something had happened between Wilder and his biographer, or between Wilder and his publisher (Harper & Row), or among all three, to make it impossible for Goldstone to publish the very documents that would have given Wilder not merely dimension and substance but presence and force. If something of the sort occurred, that is a misfortune. Apart from making fascinating reading, Wilder's own jottings and his exchanges with such figures as Ernest Hemingway, Gene Tunney, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Alexander Woollcott, Henry Luce and Sigmund Freud—to name but several of the dozens of people he knew—would have transformed Goldstone's appealing, compassionate, intimate portrait into a definitive study of a commanding literary figure. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Lina Wertmuller gets *All Screwed Up* started with vertiginous shots down into the open well of a Milan railway access, where Carletto (Nini Bignamini) and Gigi (Luigi Diberti), a couple of country boys, are swirling up to the street level in the buffeting flood of daily commuters. These first moments establish the form and pace of the film, which flows through the perplexing channels of the city, forming side streams and eddies, making a stately ballet out of the carcasses moving through a slaughterhouse and an operatic mob scene out of the dinner hour in a restaurant kitchen, composing the eight or ten young men and women with whom it is principally concerned into an exuberant dance of life.

With characteristic witlessness, the distributors are excerpting the reviews of the picture to produce banal raves like "hilarious" and "uproariously funny," appraisals that the critics do not intend and which could be sustained only if one also agreed that funerals are jolly occasions because those attending them are apt to chatter and laugh a lot. Wertmuller's characters, all of them refugees from Italy's rural South, are high-spirited, venturesome, eager to adapt to the ways and opportunities of the big city. They are also ill equipped for the transposition, hanging by their fingernails to the extreme edges of the economy and considerably frightened. Therefore grotesque mishaps befall them, they kid around a lot and, particularly the men, they are hellbent for love. As in her earlier *Love and Anarchy*, Wertmuller laces the scenario with pranks and pratfalls, but behind the feverish gaiety the prospect is bleak.

The film's characters divide between romantics and realists along the sex line. The men are forever discovering new reasons for believing that they can indeed survive, throwing themselves with bright-eyed determination into unlikely, not to mention illegal, enterprises and returning at night to what they imagine will be the admiring embraces of their sweethearts. But these latter are rather better at calculating the odds. They have set up a commune in a ramshackle historic monument of a tenement (the previous occupant, an artist, had jumped from the balcony) and there they demand cash in advance for all domestic services. Accordingly, the men as a group are more appealing than the women, but also more exasperating. To cite the leading couple, the faunlike mischievous curiosity of Bignamini is more endearing than the pussycat long-headedness of Sara Rapisarda.

A case can be made that in the past Wertmuller has shown herself biased

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Contest For New Poets

"Discovery—THE NATION, '76" has been opened jointly by The Poetry Center of the 92nd Street YM-YWHA in New York City and THE NATION. The competition, now in its second year, represents a fusion of The Poetry Center's "Discovery" contest and THE NATION's poetry prize. It is designed to attract larger audiences for young poets through the combined media of publication and poetry recital.

Winners of the 1975 contest were Jean Feraca, Katha Pollitt, Gary Soto and David St. John. They gave a group reading at The Poetry Center on May 12, and their poems appeared in THE NATION of May 17.

Contest Information:

OPEN to poets whose work has not yet been published in book form. Book form includes chapbooks (small editions) and self-published books.

REQUIREMENTS: Ten poems (not more than 500 lines) of original poetry in English are to be submitted.

THE AWARDS: Each of the four winners will receive an honorarium of $50 and will be invited to read at The Poetry Center on Monday, May 3, 1976. Each winner will have one previously unpublished poem printed in THE NATION magazine.

MANUSCRIPT DETAILS: Submit four complete sets of the ten poems, each set securely fastened. Your name, biographical information and information indicating whether a particular poem has been published should not appear on the poems. Instead, a separate cover page should include your name, address and phone number. Manuscripts will not be returned, so please retain a copy of your submission. THE NATION reserves the right to publish at its regular rates any previously unpublished poems.

JUDGING will take place in April; winners will be chosen by judges whose names will be announced after the contest is over.

DEADLINE for receipt of poems: February 9, 1976.

SEND ALL ENTRIES TO: The Poetry Center of the 92nd Street YM-YWHA, 1395 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028. Direct inquiries to Marianne Clay, Assistant to the Director, The Poetry Center.

against her own sex, but I don't think that operates here. Equality of the sexes breaks down at the survival level of poverty, when the women have to face it that, if the bottom falls out, they will be saddled with the kids. *All Screwed Up* hits that point with grotesque emphasis by presenting one of the couples with quintuplets (a hazard when you go off the pill). The husband responds with a heroism verging on hysteria; he is determined to cope, he will do literally anything to make a few thousand lire and he is last seen being hauled off to jail by the riot squad. It was a valiant try, but what one remembers is the face of his wife when, pregnant again, she realizes that she cannot endure the horror of a side-street abortion shop.

As in *Love and Anarchy*, the director is here not siding with men or women; she is siding with people, the lovely losers. If "hilarious" is the adjective which that bias brings to mind, then the picture is a hilarious tragedy. It presents Lina Wertmuller at the top of her form—a powerful and daring filmmaker who is also a considerable social critic. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

Pacific Overtures baffled me (Winter Garden). This musical by the highly skilled team of Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics), Harold Prince (producer-director) and Boris Aronson (designer), with a book by John Weidman is a thing of (extremely expensive) rags and patches. They include gorgeous costumes by Florence Klotz, a varied battery of musical instruments, Oriental and Occidental, and a huge all-male Japanese cast. The production budget —and I could not help thinking about it *throughout the evening—must have come* to rather more than $1 million.

The show is a *japonaiserie.* Besides the normal orchestra there are three Kabuki-style musicians in traditional robes, a Reciter who from time to time takes part in the action in the guise of various characters. Much "research" has gone into the details of the performance. Men appear in female roles, according to Kabuki custom, though only few of them succeed in being particularly feminine. It all adds up to super-Broadway without affording the satisfaction of Broadway at its best.

Still, it was not only fun that the producers had in mind. If *Pacific Overtures* does not insist on an anti-imperialist thesis, it implies—particularly in its lame second act—that the Japanese, having been overwhelmed in 1853 by the American "visit" of the naval forces under Commodore Perry, followed by the British, the Dutch, the Russians and the French, came to realize that the only way to rid themselves of the foreign incubus was to build their own army and navy, their own commercial and combative techniques. Western imperialism, particularly ours, incited Japanese imperialism and hence led to the catastrophe of Pearl Harbor and the counter-incursion of Toyota, Konica, Sony, and all. Let that, if you will, be a lesson to you.

The visual is the only complete asset of the evening. Regardless of "authenticity"—any lack of which on such occasions need bother no one—Boris Aronson's settings constitute the triumph of his work for the stage. He has interpreted Japanese stylistic effects in a manner all his own. Beginning with their simplicity, a kind of pristine impressionism quickly mounts to a wild riot of color with elements of Russian-Jewish-French abandon. There is nothing slapdash in the execution: everything is keenly calculated with hardly a brush stroke, a separate image, a chromatic hint, a nuance neglected. And Florence Klotz's costumes are not only richly handsome but here and there cannily funny.

Several of Sondheim's rhymes and rhythms are clever enough, as in a number in which the Shogun's mother takes malicious pleasure in warning her shaky son of the menace of Perry's black boats in the bay. But this, like several other of the more successful numbers—for instance, the one in which the military ambassadors from Europe introduce themselves, with the Englishman tripping his tongue in the mode of Gilbert and Sullivan—goes on too long. One gets the impression that the paucity of real, playable material or dramatic invention, consciously or unconsciously felt by Sondheim and his associates, has induced them to prolong the possible hit songs to the point of exhaustion.

This is evident, for example, in the ditty wherein a procuress instructs her minions how to receive and deal with the clientele from across the sea—rather cheap Broadway which the audience relishes, as it does other passages when the proceedings revert to honky-tonk. The thinness of the show's substance is epitomized in the finale of the first act, an act entirely devoted to the quandary and the fears provoked by Perry's arrival. It is a Lion Dance performed by the constantly mimed mariner himself, a dance which in itself is nice entertainment.

Most of the actors-singers-fencers are engaging. In such an ensemble it is best not to single out preferences. All that need be added is that, whether in male or female roles, often in alternation, everyone performs manfully.

As a musical *Pacific Overtures* is novel, some may even deem it an "experiment"; it

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is certainly ambitious. Perhaps some of the kiddies may enjoy it, but with only momentary relief I was haunted by a sense of pervasive dullness. I perceived through the show's elaborate structure the gaping hole of a mere notion being strenuously urged to pass as an *idea.* □

DANCE

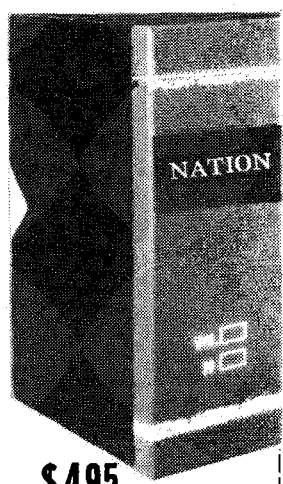
NANCY GOLDNER

As a commentator on our popular culture, Twyla Tharp has always been interested in style, in the habits performers develop and the devices they exploit to become stars. Yet she has usually been more interested in exposing the processes of star making than in serving up stars. Her dancers, although sharply profiled, are essentially virtuoso instruments of that analytic process. They intimate how they could be stars were they not so engaged in the business of dancing. Until *Push Comes to Shove,* given its première during American Ballet Theatre's winter season at the Uris Theatre, Tharp had never choreographed for anyone who was already a star. Ideally, she could have taken advantage of Mikhail Baryshnikov's star quality, his incredible technical skills, to refine further her explorations into style. But instead of using Baryshnikov as a singularly brilliant medium for her choreography, she turned him into an inverted reflection of himself as a classicist and in so doing grossly distended her own style under the guise of parody. Because *Push Comes to Shove* presents Baryshnikov as a great dancer gone loony and makes hay out of putting a bowler hat instead of a crown on the head of a prince, his dances are novel and funny, but not really more interesting or innovative than male solos in the stock Russian repertory.

The first Baryshnikov solo, which opens the ballet and which shortly becomes a trio for himself, Martine van Hamel and Marianna Tcherkassky, is done to a rag by Joseph Lamb. It is an easygoing, pass-the-hat stroll, with a few shimmies, slouches, and a couple of manic hand and head twitches interjected. Nothing but manner, it is an obvious invocation of silver-screen glamour mixed in with Tharpian gesture several times removed and thinned. No matter though; it's only the warm-up. When the front curtain pulls away, revealing the stage's full depth, and the music changes from rag to Haydn's 82nd Symphony, we expect the real beginning to begin. The shock and titillation of seeing ballet dancers wink and fool around with a hat having been duly registered, the dance can now open up beyond the subject of Tharp meets Baryshnikov in C major. It doesn't open up; it just gets funnier, and the winks get louder. In the rag, Baryshnikov exchanged the noble manner for the half-suave, half-punk manner. Now, in the first movement of the Haydn, his elegance is traded in for a lunging, careening, frenetic lexicon of balletic poses and attitudes. Always on the brink of disintegration and with a tendency toward flurries of twitches, reminiscent of your local village idiot, Baryshnikov hurtles himself through signature poses from *Don Quixote, Giselle, Corsaire,* etc., without forgetting to put his coif into place from time to time. Or is he tearing his hair *out*? With his arms shooting in all directions from no discernible trunk, he looks a little like a crazed automaton. In his desperation, he might be a dancer running through a variation one second before curtain. And in his earnestness to get through the thing without falling down, he could be the Ringo Starr of dance. I guess it's a wonderful joke to see Baryshnikov play himself going berserk (my, my, what would his Kirov teachers say?. . .), but there is no getting away from the uncomfortable feeling that Tharp makes him look crazy because she couldn't make him look off-kilter; makes him comment on other ballets because the one at hand has no story and apparently no interest in hearing what Haydn has to say.

Given Tharp's sharp powers of observation, her parodies of male behavior are dead on center, but she doesn't practice what she preaches. All the while that she's expertly if tiresomely putting down the star business, she is allowing Baryshnikov to hog the stage even when his peers are with him. Van Hamel and Tcherkassky are American Ballet Theatre's most illustrious dancers, and although in *Push Comes to Shove* van Hamel is propped up with a sexy 1940s hair style and Tcherkassky is rigged out as a flapper, they are washouts. In the first dance this may be excused by the novelty of the affair, the Baryshnikov meets Tharp event. To involve the three of them in a second trio with the same result is either impolite or a measure of Tharp's miscalculation of her abilities to move the dance into a more neutral arena.

That arena does emerge in the third of the ballet's five sections, the allegretto. The subject is ensemble dancing. This ensemble is divided into two sections, each led by a soloist, the blue group by Kristine Elliott and the orange group by Tcherkassky. Unlike the first two sections, this one brings to light all the structural elements underlying Tharp's outer coat of hyperactivity. Here one sees the amazing and beautiful contrasts between yielding torsos and sharp snaps of the arms, between expansive pauses in various kinds of attitude—itself a spacious, highly readable pose—and vigorous spurts of *batterie.* Here is where Tharp is truly delving into the subtleties of dynamics and where, incidentally, the clarity of the steps seems to deepen in proportion to the intensity and subtlety of their presentation. Yet beautiful steps are only half the story—I have rarely seen such skillful and harmonious interplay between symmetrical and asymmetrical patterns. As four-square groupings dissolve into uneven groupings of threes, fours and fives, you need not count heads in order to see the shifts in weight. These transmutations affect one's senses as would the transmutation of color from primary to pastel. Traditional patterns, such as the V shape, shift into another gear of sensibility as the two lines' point of contact is moved upstage



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and slightly to the right of center and then into still another gear as one of the lines is made to bisect the stage while the second line veers off toward the corner. Similarly, the group-to-soloist relationship is tilted but not destroyed when the lead girl moves from the center of the ensemble to the side. Even when Tharp pits the two soloists at stage left against the sixteen-woman ensemble on stage right, balance is maintained—effortlessly, lambently. If anyone of these transmutations of weight is the most sensational and lovely, it is when the orange group exits just as the blue group is entering. Two discrete units become one become two. It is like a cinematic dissolve and, even more wonderfully, like the Wilis' grand crossover in hopping arabesques in *Giselle*. Tharp's dancers merely walk "through" one another, but like the Wilis' traveling jumps, that walk suggests an invisible exchange of souls through arcane ceremony.

In the final two sections Tharp is also working with structure more than with personality and self-conscious commentary, but they don't quite work. One, to Haydn's minuet, is a polyphonic dance for ten, headed by van Hamel and a broadly mugging Clark Tippet, in which the ten "melodies" rarely mesh into harmony or, for that matter, disharmony. And again, there is one joke too many. The last section, which brings everybody on, is full-out combat between gags and structure. While Tharp is carefully working the group into a four-part canon, various and assorted individuals take curtain calls. Some of them are obviously the stars of the piece, and others are self-appointed stars—Kenneth Hughes, for example, who is made to think that, just because he did a couple of neat *brisés* in the transition dance between the fourth and fifth movement, he's entitled to a bow in full-blown cavalier style. His supercilious bow is the funniest bit of the ballet, and the idea of choreographing bows into the ballet is not without charm, nor without amusing commentary on the importance to which curtain calls have risen these days. Still, the canon gets lost. And so does Haydn.

Push Comes to Shove presents two opposing value systems that sometimes fall into their own struggling counterpoint. Audiences' reactions to Tharp's newest ballet will bring into play, I think, their own value system. I feel that in this particular dance Tharp decided to go the way of gags because she didn't have the courage or the means to be serious. At the first two performances the dancers received honest ovations. (Considering all the publicity lavished on this ballet, phony ovations were as probable.) And given that reception, plus the many nice things in the ballet, my reaction is still uneasy. A further complication is that I liked *Push Comes to Shove* better on the second viewing, but perhaps only because the dancers were playing it less broadly. Two things are for sure: I'd rate the allegretto section five times above the five other sections and the whole thing *n* times above any of the other new ballets presented by American Ballet Theatre this season. □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

Cleveland

At the Cleveland Museum of Art (until March 7) is an exhibition of Johann Liss, a painter whom I knew of, slightly, as Jan Lys. It is the sole American showing of an exhibition prepared with German cooperation and shown last year in the Rathaus, Augsburg. Liss was born in Germany, not Holland, as was once supposed, around 1597, settled in Venice sometime in the 1620s, and died there in the plague of 1629 or 1630. Like Giorgione (also a plague victim at Venice), Adam Elsheimer (like Liss a Northerner in Italy), Frédéric Bazille and Van Gogh, he died catastrophically early. Probably more people know him as an early Bohemian than as an artist; a contemporary document records a fitful life, working for hours on end and disappearing for days on end (debauchery implied). Forty or so paintings are known to survive and most of them are assembled here.

Liss is interesting in two ways, as an artist and as the victim-beneficiary of changing taste. First, what made possible his neglect, beyond the historical accidents that do occur? At the beginning of our century, when the Baroque style was rehabilitated, a pattern for the 17th century was set, with its heroes and nodal points firmly blocked in. It was not until later research refined this model that there was a place for someone in Liss's position. For one thing there was an increased interest in Italy's foreign artist population. Originally, Dutchmen who "Italianized" their pictures were thought to have sold out, like playwrights going to Hollywood. Then they began to be recognized for their handling of the street life of modern Rome. They formed an anti-classical enclave among the monuments.

The reverence paid to Caravaggio in the last thirty years is another factor. Studies of him have multiplied and the Cleveland Museum itself devoted an exhibition to "Caravaggio and His Followers" in 1971. It covered Northerners (such as Georges de la Tour, another rediscovery) as well as Italians and traced the concentric rings of a timely artist's influence. Liss was not in that exhibition, but now in his own he can be seen to have been clearly influenced by the close-up of composition and tenebrist modeling of Caraviggism. Thus the conditions for his individual revival depended on a wider shift in taste. In place of a generalized definition of Baroque style we have a differentiated view of subgroups, contacts and national shading, closer in its grainy intricacy to the real complex situation, though less elegantly whole. Sixteenth-century Venetian humanism was attenuated, but international Caraviggism gave the form for Liss's physical sensuality and driving energy.

Liss made a fusion of the two terms of Northern realism and Southern classicism. The modes of genre and mythology are brought together into a series of fruitful relationships by this German in Venice. Set mythological and historical topics are presented with new impact and acute pathos. The customary Baroque intensification of contrasts within a rolling unity came naturally to Liss, as in the powerful early "Banquet of Soldiers and Courtesans" and in the expression of a sudden flare-up of animal alarm in "Satyr and Peasants." The psychologically charged close-up of figures at moments of extreme feeling is brilliantly handled. Perhaps the high point of the exhibition is the group of pictures of the repentant Magdalene, the death of Cleopatra, and Judith, which examine women's states of mind at climactic points of grief, defeat and triumph. Replicas from the artist's own hand of his successful pictures confront one another in the show, handy for scholars who want to sort out priorities, but also presenting us all with problems about the repeatability of intensity.

The Liss exhibition is not being enthusiastically attended; it is pretty specialized for the general public, though local patriotism might have been kindled by the fact that one of the pictures, an insolent figure of "Victorious Love," was recently acquired by the museum. Museums have been criticized in the last few years for their neglect of public interest which critics usually link with calls for decentralization, meaning satellite galleries, artmobiles and prints in libraries. In fact, museums have a differentiated audience and demands for community services ignore their other clients. Without projects like the present exhibition, based on exacting scholarship and long preparation, museums forsake one of their prime functions—the handling of original works of art and their constant reinterpretation. This aspect of museum work preserves our knowledge of the past from inertness. Thus the Liss exhibition, though narrow in its appeal, is a dynamic achievement. To criticize the show from a Populist standpoint would be to put short-term utilitarian demands before every other aspect of museum responsibility. □

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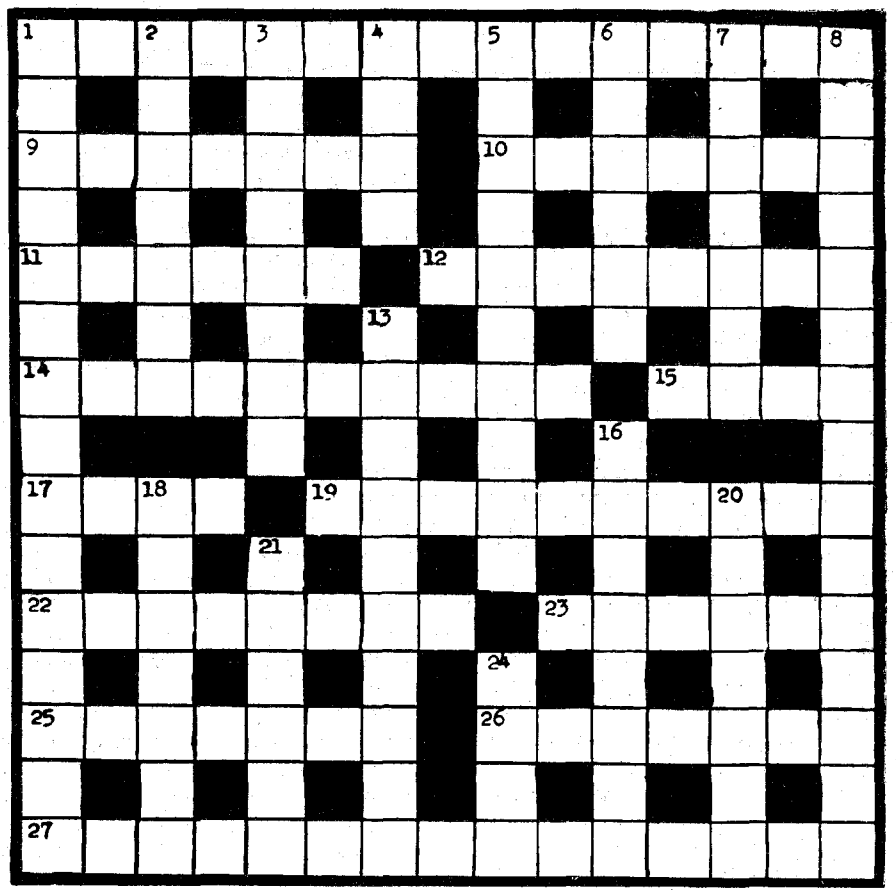
Crossword Puzzle No. 1617

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Song arrangement for those who don't like it hot. (3-12)
9 Might one be privileged to handle what you will? (7)
10 Possibly a sign to play out in a ruin torn down by a bully. (7)
11 Tax this, and you'll go scot-free. (6)
12 Well now, this has to be last! (5,3)
14 Possibly a blot under discussion here nowadays, perhaps associated with mail-carriers. (5-5)
15 It might make you feel bad if *Deutschland* doesn't have any. (4)
17 The position of 24 might be wooden. (4)
19 The hard part with good service going to an old crab, for example. (10)
22 Under-fed around it, but still flourished. (8)
23 Tree to a dissident group in New York. (6)
25 Where Cleveland is upset with an inside traitor, completely in character. (7)
26 In which one probably doesn't believe his team is involved. (7)
27 Did such a character step aside gracefully? (3,6,6)

DOWN

1 When a bowler falls down, for example, you should get the answer right away. (2,3,4,2,1,3)
2 Is one wrapped up in money? Quite the contrary. (7)
3 Eight-foot creatures? (8)
4 Another animal is hidden when the wolf of 22 doesn't return. (4)
5 A description of the Prodigal Son? (10)
6 One way to counteract the position of unemployed actors. (6)
7 I start at time of trouble to copy things. (7)
8 Is one likely to grow things nicely? (9,6)
13 How the subject of kidnaping might be successfully handled. (7,3)
16 High-pressure advertising. (8)
18 Whip up a sudden flow of activity around the small business establishment. (7)
20 Looking at the copy with a critical eye. (7)
21 A, for example, part of 24. (6)
24 Protection might also be 17. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1616

ACROSS: 1 Grease one's palm; 8 Natural death; 10 Real estate; 11 Flat; 13 Llamas; 14 Manciple; 16 Agar-agar; 17 Rococo; 19 Arch; 20 Taking part; 22 Stradivarius; 23 Fly to the rescue. DOWN: 1 General manager; 2 Extravagance; 3 Street Arab; 4 Oblate; 5 Eventual; 6 Pets; 7 A matter of taste; 9 Kleptomaniac; 12 Act of Grace; 15 Cataract; 18 Divide; 21 Stet.

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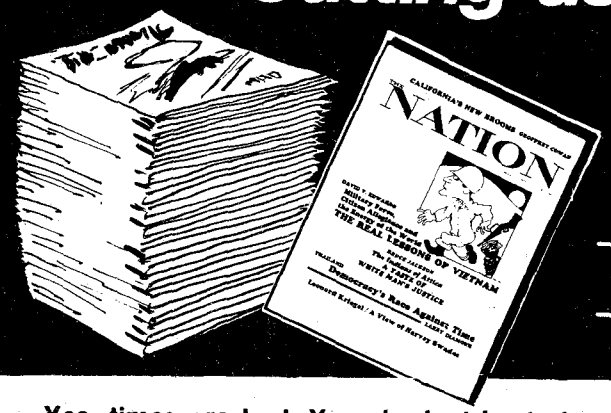

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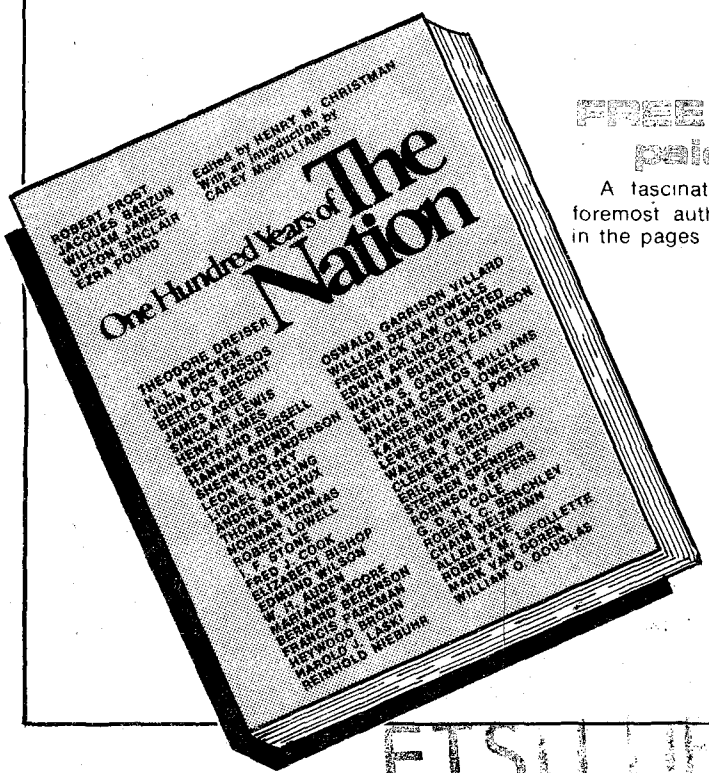

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